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THE

HISTORY

OF

England,

FROM

THE REVOLUTION IN 1688

TO

THE DEATH OF GEORGE II.

ST PAUL'S

BEING A CONTINUATION OF HUME.

By T. SMOLLETT, M.D.

EMBELLISHED WITH

Engravings on Copper and Wood,

FROM THURSTON'S DESIGNS.

VOLUME THE FOURTH.

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CONTENTS

OF

VOL. IV.

CHAPTER XXI.

Reflections on the Peace.—The Prince of Wales's Adherents join the Opposition.—Character of the Ministry.—Session opened.—Debate on the Address.—Supplies granted.—Exorbitant Demand of the Empress Queen opposed.—Violent Contest concerning the Seamen's Bill.—Objections to the Mutiny Bill.—Bill for limiting the Term of a Soldier's Service.—Measures taken with Respect to the African Trade.—Scheme for improving the British Fishery.—Attempt to open the Commerce to Hudson's Bay.—Plan for manning the Navy.—Fruitless Motions made by the Opposition.—Severities exercised upon some Students at Oxford.—Duke of Newcastle chosen Chancellor of the University of Cambridge.—Tumults in different Parts of the Kingdom.—Scheme for a Settlement in Nova Scotia.—Town of Halifax founded.—French Attempts to settle the Island of Tobago.—Rejoicings for the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle.—Pretender's eldest Son arrested at Paris.—Appearance of a Rupture between Russia and Sweden.—Interposition of the King of Prussia.—Measures taken by the French Ministry.—Conduct of the different European Powers.—Insolence of the Barbary Corsairs.—Disturbances in England.—Session opened.—Subjects of Debate.—Scheme for reducing the Interest of the National Debt.—Act passed for that Purpose.—New Mutiny Bill.—Bill for encouraging the Importation of Iron from America.—Erection of the British Herring Fishery.—New African Company.—Westminster Election.—Earthquakes in London.—Pestilential Fever at the Session in the Old Bailey.—Disputes between Russia and Sweden.—Plan for electing the Arch-Duke Joseph King of the Romans.—Opposition of the King of Prussia.—Disputes with the French about the Limits of Nova

Scotia.—Treaty with Spain.—Session opened.—Debate on the Address.—Supplies granted.—Death and Character of the Prince of Wales.—Settlement of a Regency, in Case of a minor Sovereign. —General Naturalization Bill.—Censure passed upon a Paper entitled Constitutional Queries.—Proceedings of the Commons on the Westminster Election.—Mr. Murray sent Prisoner to Newgate.—Session closed.—Style altered . . . Page 1

CHAPTER XXII.

Death of the Queen of Denmark and Prince of Orange.—Misunderstanding between the Czarina and King of Prussia.—Measures for electing a King of the Romans.—Death of the King of Sweden. —Session opened.—Animosity of the Commons towards Mr. Murray.—Proceedings upon a Pamphlet, entitled the Case of Mr. Murray.—Supplies granted.—Civil Regulations.—Law relating to the forfeited Estates in Scotland.—New Consolidations of Funds. —Two Ports opened for the Importation of Irish Wool.—The King sets out for Hanover.—Affairs of the Continent.—Dispute between Hanover and Prussia, concerning East Friezeland.—Misunderstanding between the Courts of London and Berlin.—Improvement of Pomerania.—Treaty with the Elector Palatine.— Session opened.—Supplies granted.—Game Act.—Act for performing Quarantine.—And for preventing the plundering of shipwrecked Vessels.—Bill relating to the Bounty on Corn exported. —Turkey Trade laid open.—Naturalization of the Jews.—Marriage Act.—Deliberations concerning the Sugar Colonies.—Fate of the Register Bill.—Sir Hans Sloane's Museum purchased by Parliament.—Story of Elizabeth Canning.—Execution of Dr. Cameron.—Tumults in different Parts of the Kingdom.—Disturbances in France.—Proceedings of the Diet relative to East Friezeland.—Treaty between the Court of Vienna and the Duke of Modena.—Conferences with Respect to Nova Scotia broke up. —Description of Nova Scotia.—Disputes concerning its Limits 87

CHAPTER XXIII.

Ambitious Schemes of the French in North America.—Rise and Conduct of the Ohio Company.—Letter from the Governor of Virginia to the French Commander at Riviere-au-Bœuf.—Perfidious Practices of the French in Nova Scotia.—Major Laurence defeats the French Neutrals.—British Ambassador at Paris amused with general Promises.—Session opened.—Supplies granted.— Repeal of the Act for naturalizing Jews.—Motion for repealing a former Act favourable to the Jews.—East India Mutiny-Bill.—

Case of Le ——.—Session closed.—Death of Mr. Pelham.—Change in the Ministry.—New Parliament assembled and prorogued.—Disputes in the Irish Parliament.—Transactions in the East Indies.—Account of the English Settlements on the Malabar and Coromandel Coast.—Dispute about the Government of Arcot.—Mahommed Ali Khan supported by the English.—Mr. Clive takes Arcot.—And defeats the Enemy in the Plains of Arani, and at Koveripauk.—He reduces three Forts, and takes M. d'Anteuil.—Chunda Saib taken and put to Death, and his Army routed.—Convention between the East India Companies of England and France.—General View of the British Colonies in North America.—New England and New York.—New Jersey.—Pennsylvania.—Maryland.—Virginia.—The two Carolinas.—Georgia.—The French surprise Logs Town, on the Ohio.—Conference with the Indians at Albany.—Colonel Washington defeated and taken by the French on the Ohio.—Divisions among the British Colonies.—The hereditary Prince of Hesse-Cassel professes the Roman Catholic Religion.—Parliament of Paris recalled from Exile.—Affairs of Spain and Portugal.—Session opened —Supplies granted.—Bill in Behalf of Chelsea Pensioners.—Oxfordshire Election.—Message from the King to the House of Commons.—Court of Versailles amuses the English Ministry.—Session closed

Page 143

CHAPTER XXIV.

Preparations for War.—Earl Paulet's Motion against the King's going to Hanover.—Regency appointed during his Majesty's Absence.—Boscawen's Expedition.—Alcide and Lys taken.—French Ambassador recalled.—Their Trade greatly distressed.—Affairs of the English in America.—Colonel Monckton takes Beau-sejour.—General Braddock's unfortunate Expedition —He falls into an Ambuscade; is defeated and killed.—Disagreement between the Governor and Assembly of Pennsylvania.—Expedition against Crown-Point and Niagara resolved on.—General Johnson encamps at Lake George.—Where he is attacked by the French, who are entirely defeated.—Bravery of Captain M'Ginnes.—General Johnson created a Baronet.—Description of Fort Oswego and Lake Ontario.—Neglect of the English in not fortifying it.—Expedition against Niagara.—General Shirley returns to Albany.—End of the Campaign in America.—Fruitless Intrigues of the French in Spain and Germany.—Treaty of the King of Great Britain with the Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel.—News of the Capture of the Alcide and Lys reaches England.—The King returns from Hanover, and concludes a Treaty with Russia.—Declaration of the

French Ministry at the Court of Vienna.—Spirited Declaration of the King of Prussia.—The French make another unsuccessful Attempt upon the Court of Spain.—The imperial Court refuses Auxiliaries to England.—The French take the Blandford Man of War, but return it.—State of the English and French Navies.—Session opened.—Remarkable Addresses of the Lords and Commons.—His Majesty's Answer.—Alterations in the Ministry.—Mr. Fox made Secretary of State.—Supplies voted.—Earthquake at Lisbon.—Relief voted by Parliament to the Portuguese.—Troops, &c. voted.—Mutiny Bill, Marine, and Mariners' Acts continued.—Act for raising a Regiment of Foot in North America.—Maritime Laws of England extended to America.—Quiet of Ireland restored.—Treaty concluded with Prussia.—New Militia Bill passed by the Commons, but rejected by the Lords.—Session closed . . . . . Page 207

CHAPTER XXV.

Letter from M. Rouillé to the Secretary of State.—The two Nations recriminate on each other.—The French threaten Great Britain with an Invasion.—Requisition of Six Thousand Dutch Troops according to Treaty.—Message from the King to the Parliament.—A Body of Hessians and Hanoverians transported into England.—French Preparations at Toulon.—Admiral Byng sails for the Mediterranean.—He arrives at Gibraltar.—Engages M. de la Galissonniere off Minorca.—And returns to Gibraltar.—Ferment of the People at Home.—Admiral Byng superseded, and sent Home Prisoner.—Account of the Siege of St. Philip's Fort, in Minorca.—Precautions taken by General Blakeney.—Siege commenced.—English Squadron appears.—General Attack of the Works.—The Garrison capitulates.—Sir Edward Hawke sails to Minorca.—Rejoicings in France, and Clamours in England.—Gallantry of Fortunatus Wright.—General Blakeney created a Baron.—Measures taken for the Defence of Great Britain.—Proclamation.—Earl of Loudoun appointed Commander-in-Chief in America.—His Britannic Majesty's Declaration of War.—Substance of the French King's Declaration.—Address of the City of London.—Trial of General Fowke.—Affairs of America.—Colonel Bradstreet defeats a Body of French on the River Onondaga.—Earl of Loudoun arrives at New York.—Oswego reduced by the Enemy.—Further Proceedings in America.—Naval Operations in that Country.—Transactions in the East Indies.—Calcutta besieged by the Viceroy of Bengal.—Deplorable Fate of those who perished in the Dungeon there.—Additional Cruelties exercised

on Mr. Holwell.—Resolution against Angria.—Fort of Geria taken by Admiral Watson and Mr. Clive. Their subsequent Proceedings in the River Ganges . . . . Page 260

CHAPTER XXVI.

Motives of the War in Germany.—Conspiracy in Sweden.—Measures taken by the King of Prussia and Elector of Hanover.—Endeavours of the Court of Vienna to frustrate them.—His Prussian Majesty demands an Explanation from the Empress-Queen.—Her Answer.—The Prussian Army enters Saxony, and publishes a Manifesto.—Prince Ferdinand takes Leipsic.—King of Prussia takes Possession of Dresden, and blocks up the King of Poland at Pirna.—Prussian Army penetrates into Bohemia, and fights the Battle of Lowoschutz.—Saxon Army surrenders.—King of Poland's Memorial to the States-General.—Imperial Decrees published against the King of Prussia.—Declarations of different Powers.—His Prussian Majesty's Answer to the Saxon Memorial.—And Justification of his Conduct.—Remarks on both those Pieces.—Disputes between the Parliament of Paris and the Clergy.—Dearth of Corn in England.—Hanoverian Auxiliaries sent back.—Session opened.—Debates on the Address.—Bill passed for prohibiting the Exportation of Corn.—Message to the House concerning Admiral Byng.—Supplies granted.—Reflections on the continental War.—Messages from the King to the Parliament.—Measures taken to remove the Scarcity of Corn.—Militia Bill.—Petitions for and against it.—Altered by the Lords.—Bill for quartering the foreign Troops, and for regulating the Marines while on Shore.—Bill for the more speedy recruiting the Land Forces and Marines.—Act relating to Pawnbrokers and Gaming-Houses.—Laws relating to the Wages of Weavers, and to the Improvement of the British Fishery.—Act for importing American Iron, Duty free.—Regulations with Respect to the Importation of Silk.—Smugglers encouraged to enter into his Majesty's Service.—Inquiry into the Scarcity of Corn.—Investigation of the Loss of Minorca.—Examination of the American Contract.—Inquiry into the Conduct of Admiral Knowles, as Governor of Jamaica.—Resolutions concerning Milford-Haven.—Session closed.—Trial of Admiral Byng.—Recommended to Mercy.—Message from the King to the Parliament respecting the Sentence.—Bill to release the Members of the Court-Martial from their Oath of Secrecy.—Execution of Admiral Byng.—Paper delivered by him to the Marshal of the Admiralty.—Remarks on his Fate . . 322

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George the Second.

The chevalier de St. George one evening entering the narrow lane that leads to the Paris opera, the barrier was immediately shut, and the sergeant of the guard immediately called 'to arms,' on which Monsieur de Vaudreuil, exempt of the French guards, advancing to Edward, 'Prince,' said he, 'I arrest you in the king's name by virtue of this order.' At this instant the youth was surrounded by four grenadiers, in order to prevent any mischief he might have done with a case of pocket pistols which he always carried about him; and a guard was placed at all the avenues and doors of the opera-house, lest any tumult should have ensued among the populace.

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THE HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

CHAPTER XXI.

Reflections on the Peace.—The Prince of Wales's Adherents join the Opposition.—Character of the Ministry.—Session opened.—Debate on the Address.—Supplies granted.—Exorbitant Demand of the Empress Queen opposed.—Violent Contest concerning the Seamen's Bill.—Objections to the Mutiny Bill.—Bill for limiting the Term of a Soldier's Service.—Measures taken with Respect to the African Trade.—Scheme for improving the British Fishery.—Attempt to open the Commerce to Hudson's Bay.—Plan for manning the Navy.—Fruitless Motions made by the Opposition.—Severities exercised upon some Students at Oxford.—Duke of Newcastle chosen Chancellor of the University of Cambridge.—Tumults in different Parts of the Kingdom.—Scheme for a Settlement in Nova Scotia.—Town of Halifax founded.—French Attempts to settle the Island of Tobago.—Rejoicings for the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle.—Pretender's eldest Son arrested at Paris.—Appearance of a Rupture between Russia and Sweden.—Interposition of the King of Prussia.—Measures taken by the French Ministry.—Conduct of the different European Powers.—Insolence of the Barbary Corsairs.—Disturbances in England.—Session opened.—Subjects of Debate.—Scheme for reducing the Interest of the National Debt.—Act passed for that Purpose.—New Mutiny Bill.—Bill for encouraging the Importation of Iron from America.—Erection of the British Herring Fishery.—New

African Company.—Westminster Election.—Earthquakes in London.—Pestilential Fever at the Session in the Old Bailey.—Disputes between Russia and Sweden.—Plan for electing the Arch-Duke Joseph King of the Romans.—Opposition of the King of Prussia.—Disputes with the French about the Limits of Nova Scotia.—Treaty with Spain.—Session opened.—Debate on the Address.—Supplies granted.—Death and Character of the Prince of Wales.—Settlement of a Regency, in Case of a minor Sovereign.—General Naturalization Bill.—Censure passed upon a Paper entitled Constitutional Queries.—Proceedings of the Commons on the Westminster Election.—Mr. Murray sent Prisoner to Newgate.—Session closed.—Style altered.

REFLECTIONS ON THE PEACE.

The peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, however unstable or inglorious it might appear to those few who understood the interests, and felt for the honour, of their country, was nevertheless not unwelcome to the nation in general. The British ministry will always find it more difficult to satisfy the people at the end of a successful campaign, than at the conclusion of an unfortunate war. The English are impatient of miscarriage and disappointment, and too apt to be intoxicated with victory. At this period they were tired of the burthens, and sick of the disgraces, to which they had been exposed in the course of seven tedious campaigns. They had suffered considerable losses and interruption in the article of commerce, which was the source of their national opulence and power; they knew it would necessarily be clogged with additional duties for the maintenance of a continental war, and the support of foreign subsidiaries; and they drew very faint presages of future success either from the conduct of their allies, or the capacity of their commanders. To a people influenced by these considerations, the restoration of a free trade, the respite from that anxiety and suspense which the prosecution of a war never fails to engender, and the prospect of a speedy deliverance from discouraging restraint and

oppressive impositions, were advantages that sweetened the bitter draught of a dishonourable treaty, and induced the majority of the nation to acquiesce in the peace, not barely without murmuring, but even with some degree of satisfaction and applause.

THE PRINCE OF WALES'S ADHERENTS JOIN THE OPPOSITION.

Immediately after the exchange of ratifications at Aix-la-Chapelle the armies were broken up; the allies in the Netherlands withdrew their several proportions of troops; the French began to evacuate Flanders; and the English forces were re-embarked for their own country. His Britannic majesty returned from his German dominions in November, having landed near Margate, in Kent, after a dangerous passage; and on the twenty-ninth of the same month he opened the session of Parliament. By this time the misunderstanding between the first two personages of the royal family had been increased by a fresh succession of matter. The Prince of Wales had held a court of Stannary, in quality of Duke of Cornwall; and revived some claims attached to that dignity, which, had they been admitted, would have greatly augmented his influence among the Cornish boroughs. These efforts roused the jealousy of the administration, which had always considered them as an interest wholly dependent on the crown; and, therefore, the pretensions of his royal highness were opposed by the whole weight of the ministry. His adherents, resenting these hostilities as an injury to their royal master, immediately joined the remnant of the former opposition in Parliament, and resolved to counteract all the ministerial measures that should fall under their cognizance; at least they determined to seize every opportunity of thwarting the servants of the crown, in every scheme or proposal that had not an evident tend-

ency to the advantage of the nation. This band of auxiliaries was headed by the Earl of E—t, Dr. Lee, and Mr. N—t. The first possessed a species of eloquence rather plausible than powerful: he spoke with fluency and fire; his spirit was bold and enterprising, his apprehension quick, and his repartee severe. Dr. Lee was a man of extensive erudition, and irreproachable morals, particularly versed in the civil law, which he professed, and perfectly well acquainted with the constitution of his country. Mr. N—t was an orator of middling abilities, who harangued upon all subjects indiscriminately, and supplied with confidence what he wanted in capacity: he had been at some pains to study the business of the House, as well as to understand the machine of government; and was tolerably well heard, as he generally spoke with an appearance of good humour, and hazarded every whimsical idea, as it arose in his imagination. But Lord Bolingbroke is said to have been the chief spring which, in secret, actuated the deliberations of the prince's court. That nobleman, seemingly sequestered from the tumults of a public life, resided at Battersea, where he was visited like a sainted shrine by all the distinguished votaries of wit, eloquence, and political ambition. There he was cultivated and admired for the elegance of his manners, and the charms of his conversation. The prince's curiosity was first captivated by his character, and his esteem was afterwards secured by the irresistible address of that extraordinary personage, who continued in a regular progression to insinuate himself still further and further into the good graces of his royal patron. How far the conduct of his royal highness was influenced by the private advice of this nobleman we shall not pretend to determine; but, certain it is, the friends of the ministry propagated a report, that he was the dictator of those measures which the prince adopted; and that, under the specious pretext of attachment to the heir apparent of

the crown, he concealed his real aim, which was to perpetuate the breach in the royal family. Whatever his sentiments and motives might have been, this was no other than a revival of the old ministerial clamour, that a man cannot be well affected to the king, if he pretends to censure any measure of the administration.

CHARACTER OF THE MINISTRY.

The weight which the opposition derived from these new confederates in the House of Commons was still greatly overbalanced by the power, influence, and ability that sustained every ministerial project. Mr. Pelham, who chiefly managed the helm of affairs, was generally esteemed as a man of honesty and candour, actuated by a sincere love for his country, though he had been educated in erroneous principles of government, and in some measure obliged to prosecute a fatal system, which descended to him by inheritance. At this time he numbered Mr. Pitt among his fellow-ministers, and was moreover supported by many other individuals of distinguished abilities; among whom the first place in point of genius was due to Mr. M. who executed the office of solicitor-general. This gentleman, the son of a noble family in North Britain, had raised himself to great eminence at the bar, by a most keen intuitive spirit of apprehension, that seemed to seize every object at first glance; an innate sagacity, that saved the trouble of intense application; and an irresistible stream of eloquence, that flowed pure and classical, strong and copious, reflecting, in the most conspicuous point of view, the subjects over which it rolled, and sweeping before it all the slime of formal hesitation, and all the entangling weeds of chicanery. Yet the servants of the crown were not so implicitly attached to the first minister as to acquiesce in all his plans, and dedicate their time and talents to the support of every court mea-

sure indiscriminately. This was one material point in which Mr. Pelham deviated from the maxims of his predecessor, who admitted of no contradiction from any of his adherents or fellow-servants, but insisted on sacrificing their whole perception and faculties to his conduct and disposal. That sordid deference to a minister no longer characterised the subordinate instruments of the administration. It was not unusual to see the great officers of the government divided in a parliamentary debate, and to hear the secretary at war opposing with great vehemence a clause suggested by the chancellor of the exchequer. After all, if we coolly consider those arguments which have been bandied about, and retorted with such eagerness and acrimony in the House of Commons, and divest them of those passionate tropes and declamatory metaphors which the spirit of opposition alone had produced, we shall find very little left for the subject of dispute, and sometimes be puzzled to discover any material source of disagreement.

SESSION OPENED.

In the month of November his majesty opened the session of Parliament with a speech, acquainting them, That the definitive treaty of peace was at length signed by all the parties concerned: That he had made the most effectual provision for securing the rights and interests of his own subjects; and procured for his allies the best conditions which, in the present situation of affairs, could be obtained. He said he had found a general good disposition in all parties to bring the negotiation to a happy conclusion; and observed, that we might promise ourselves a long enjoyment of the blessings of peace. Finally, after having remarked that times of tranquillity were the proper seasons for lessening the national debt, and strengthening the kingdom against future events, he recommended to the Commons

the improvement of the public revenue, the maintenance of a considerable naval force, the advancement of commerce, and the cultivation of the arts of peace. This speech, as usual, was echoed back by an address to the throne from both Houses, containing general expressions of the warmest loyalty and gratitude to his majesty, and implying the most perfect satisfaction and acquiescence in the articles of the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle.

The members in the opposition, according to custom, cavilled at the nature of this address. They observed, that the late pacification was the worst and most inglorious of all the bad treaties to which the English nation had ever subscribed: that it was equally disgraceful, indefinite, and absurd: they said, the British navy had gained such an ascendancy over the French at sea, that the sources of their wealth were already choked up; that the siege of Maestricht would have employed their arms in the Low Countries till the arrival of the Russians; and that the accession of these auxiliaries would have thrown the superiority into the scale of the allies. They did not fail to take notice, that the most important and original object of the war was left wholly undecided; and demonstrated the absurdity of their promising, in the address, to make good such engagements as his majesty had entered into with his allies, before they knew what those engagements were. In answer to these objections, the ministers replied, That the peace was in itself rather better than could be expected; and that the smallest delay might have proved fatal to the liberties of Europe. They affirmed, that the Dutch were upon the point of concluding a neutrality, in consequence of which their troops would have been withdrawn from the allied army; and in that case, even the addition of the Russian auxiliaries would not have rendered it a match for the enemy. They asserted, that if the war had been prolonged another year, the national

credit of Great Britain must have been entirely ruined, many of the public funds having sunk below par in the preceding season, so that the ministry had begun to despair of seeing the money paid in on the new subscription. With respect to the restoration of Cape Breton, the limits of Nova Scotia, and the right of navigating without search in the American seas, which right had been left unestablished in the treaty, they declared, that the first was an unnecessary expense, of no consequence to Great Britain; and that the other two were points in dispute, to be amicably settled in private conferences by commissaries duly authorized; but by no means articles to be established by a general treaty.

What the opposition wanted in strength, it endeavoured to make up with spirit and perseverance. Every ministerial motion and measure was canvassed, sifted, and decried with uncommon art and vivacity: but all this little availed against the single article of superior numbers; and accordingly this was the source of certain triumph in all debates in which the servants of the crown were united. The nation had reason to expect an immediate mitigation in the article of annual expense, considering the number of troops and ships of war which had been reduced at the ratification of the treaty; but they were disagreeably undeceived in finding themselves again loaded with very extraordinary impositions, for the payment of a vast debt which government had contracted in the course of the war, notwithstanding the incredible aids granted by Parliament. The committee of supply established four points of consideration, in their deliberations concerning the sums necessary to be raised; namely, for fulfilling the engagements which the Parliament had entered into with his majesty, and the services undertaken for the success of the war; for discharging debts contracted by government for making good deficiencies; and for defraying the current expense

of the year. It appeared, that the nation owed four-and-forty thousand pounds to the Elector of Bavaria; above thirty thousand to the Duke of Brunswick; the like sum to the Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel; and near nine thousand pounds to the Elector of Mentz. The Queen of Hungary claimed an arrear of one hundred thousand pounds. The city of Glasgow, in North Britain, presented a petition, praying to be reimbursed the sum of ten thousand pounds, extorted from that corporation by the son of the pretender, during the rebellion. One hundred and twelve thousand pounds were owing to the forces in North America and the East Indies; besides near half a million due on extraordinary expenses incurred by the land forces in America, Flanders, and North Britain, by the office of ordnance, and other services of the last year, to which the parliamentary provision did not extend. The remaining debt of the ordnance amounted to above two hundred and thirty thousand pounds: but the navy bills could not be discharged for less than four millions. An addition of two millions three hundred and seventy-four thousand three hundred thirty-three pounds fifteen shillings and two pence was also required for the current service of the year. In a word, the whole annual supply exceeded eight millions sterling—a sum at which the whole nation expressed equal astonishment and disgust. It was charged upon the duties on malt, mum, cyder, and perry, the land-tax at four shillings in the pound, annuities on the sinking-fund, an application of one million from that deposit, and the loan of the like sum to be charged on the first aids of next session. The number of seamen was reduced to seventeen thousand, and that of the land forces to eighteen thousand eight hundred and fifty-seven, including guards and garrisons.

EXORBITANT DEMAND OF THE EMPRESS-QUEEN OPPOSED.

Every article of expense, however, was warmly disputed by the anti-courtiers; especially the demand of the Queen of Hungary, which was deemed unreasonable, exorbitant, and rapacious, considering the seas of blood which we had shed, and the immensity of treasure we had exhausted for her benefit: and surely the subjects of this nation had some reason to complain of an indulgence of this nature, granted to a power which they had literally snatched from the brink of ruin—a power whose quarrel they had espoused with a degree of enthusiasm that did much more honour to their gallantry than to their discretion—a power that kept aloof, with a stateliness of pride peculiar to herself and family; and beheld her British auxiliaries fighting her battles at their own expense; while she squandered away, in the idle pageantry of barbarous magnificence, those ample subsidies which they advanced in order to maintain her armies, and furnish out her proportion of the war. The leaders of the opposition neglected no opportunity of embittering the triumphs of their adversaries; they inveighed against the extravagance of granting sixteen thousand pounds for the pay of general and staff officers, during a peace that required no such establishment, especially at a juncture when the national incumbrances rendered it absolutely necessary to practise every expedient of economy. They even combated the request of the city of Glasgow, to be indemnified for the extraordinary exaction it underwent from the rebels, though it appeared, from unquestionable evidence, that this extraordinary contribution was exacted on account of that city's peculiar attachment to the reigning family; that it had always invariably adhered to revolution principles; and, with an unequalled spirit of loyalty and zeal for the

protestant succession, distinguished itself both in the last and preceding rebellion.

VIOLENT CONTEST CONCERNING THE SEAMEN'S BILL.

But the most violent contest arose on certain regulations which the ministry wanted to establish in two bills, relating to the sea and land service. The first, under the title of a bill for amending, explaining, and reducing into one act of Parliament the laws relating to the navy, was calculated solely with a view of subjecting half-pay officers to martial law—a design which not only furnished the opposition with a plausible handle for accusing the ministers, as intending to encroach upon the constitution, in order to extend the influence of the crown; but also alarmed the sea-officers to such a degree, that they assembled to a considerable number, with a view to deliberate upon the proper means of defending their privileges and liberties from invasion. The result of their consultations was a petition to the House of Commons, subscribed by three admirals and forty-seven captains, not members of Parliament, representing, that the bill in agitation contained several clauses, tending to the injury and dishonour of all naval officers, as well as to the detriment of his majesty's service; and that the laws already in force had been always found effectual for securing the service of officers on half-pay upon the most pressing occasions: they, therefore, hoped, that they should not be subjected to new hardships and discouragements; and begged to be heard by their counsel, before the committee of the whole House, touching such parts of the bill as they apprehended would be injurious to themselves and the other officers of his majesty's navy. This petition was presented to the House by Sir John Norris, and the motion for its being read was seconded by Sir Peter Warren, whose character was

universally esteemed and beloved in the nation. This measure had like to have produced very serious consequences. Many commanders and subalterns had repaired to the Admiralty, and threatened, in plain terms, to throw up their commissions in case the bill should pass into a law; and a general ferment was begun among all the subordinate members of the navy. A motion was made, That the petitioners, according to their request, should be heard by their counsel; and this proposal was strongly urged by the first orators of the anti-ministerial association; but the minister, confiding in his own strength, reinforced by the abilities of Mr. Pitt, Mr. Lyttelton, and Mr. Fox, the secretary at war, strenuously opposed the motion, which, upon a division, was thrown out by a great majority. The several articles of the bill were afterwards separately debated with great warmth; and though Mr. Pelham had, with the most disinterested air of candour, repeatedly declared that he required no support even from his own adherents, but that which might arise from reason unrestrained, and full conviction, he, on this occasion, reaped all the fruit from their zeal and attachment which could be expected from the most implicit complaisance. Some plausible amendments of the most exceptionable clauses were offered, particularly of that which imposed an oath upon the members of every court-martial, that they should not, on any account, disclose the opinions or transactions of any such tribunal. This was considered as a sanction, under which any court-martial might commit the most flagrant acts of injustice and oppression, which even Parliament itself could not redress, because it would be impossible to ascertain the truth, eternally sealed up by this absurd obligation. The amendment proposed was, that the members of a court-martial might reveal the transactions and opinions of it, in all cases wherein the courts of justice, as the law now stands, have a right to inter-

fere, if required thereto by either House of Parliament: a very reasonable mitigation, which, however, was rejected by the majority. Nevertheless, the suspicion of an intended encroachment had raised such a clamour without doors, and diffused the odium of this measure so generally, that the minister thought proper to drop the projected article of war, subjecting the reformed officers of the navy to the jurisdictions of courts-martial; and the bill being also softened in other particulars, during its passage through the Upper House, at length received the royal assent.

The flame which this act had kindled was rather increased than abated on the appearance of a new mutiny-bill replete with divers innovations, tending to augment the influence of the crown, as well as the authority and power of a military jurisdiction. All the articles of war established since the reign of Charles the second were submitted to the inspection of the Commons; and in these appeared a gradual spirit of encroachment, almost imperceptibly deviating from the civil institutes of the English constitution, towards the establishment of a military dominion. By this new bill a power was vested in any commander-in-chief to revise and correct any legal sentence of a court-martial, by which the members of such a court, corresponding with the nature of a civil jury, were rendered absolutely useless, and the commander in a great measure absolute; for he had not only the power of summoning such officers as he might choose to sit on any trial, a prerogative unknown to any civil court of judicature; but he was also at liberty to review and alter the sentence; so that a man was subject to two trials for the same offence, and the commander-in-chief was judge both of the guilt and the punishment. By the final clause of this bill, martial law was extended to all officers on half-pay; and the same arguments which had been urged against this article in the navy bill, were now repeated and reinforced

with double fervour. Many reasons were offered to prove that the half-pay was allotted as a recompense for past services; and the opponents of the bill affirmed, that such an article, by augmenting the dependents of the crown, might be very dangerous to the constitution. On the other hand, the partisans of the ministry asserted, that the half-pay was granted as a retaining fee, and that originally all those who enjoyed this indulgence were deemed to be in actual service, consequently subject to martial law. Mr. Pitt, who at this time exercised the office of paymaster-general with a rigour of integrity unknown to the most disinterested of all his predecessors in that department, espoused the clause in dispute, as a necessary extension of military discipline, which could never be attended with any bad consequence to the liberty of the nation. The remarks which he made on this occasion implied an opinion that our liberties wholly existed in dependence upon the direction of the sovereign, and the virtue of the army. "To that virtue (said he) we trust even at this hour, small as our army is—to that virtue we must have trusted, had this bill been modelled as its warmest opposers could have wished; and without this virtue, should the Lords, the Commons, and the people of England, entrench themselves behind parchment up to the teeth, the sword will find a passage to the vitals of the constitution." All the disputed articles of the bill being sustained on the shoulders of a great majority, it was conveyed to the Upper House, where it excited another violent contest. Upon the question whether officers on half-pay had not been subject to martial law, the judges were consulted and divided in their sentiments. The Earl of Bath declared his opinion, that martial law did not extend to reformed officers; and opened all the sluices of his ancient eloquence. He admitted a case which was urged, of seven officers on half-pay, who, being taken in actual rebellion at Pres-

ton, in the year 1745, had been executed on the spot by martial law, in consequence of the king's express order. He candidly owned, that he himself was secretary at war at that period; that he had approved of this order, and even transmitted it to General Carpenter, who commanded at Preston; but now his opinion was entirely changed. He observed, that when the forementioned rebellion first broke out, the House presented an address to the king, desiring his majesty would be pleased to employ all half-pay officers, and gratify them with whole pay; and, indeed, all such officers were voted on whole pay by the House of Commons. They were afterwards apprized of this vote by an advertisement in the gazette, and ordered to hold themselves in readiness to repair to such places as should be appointed; and finally commanded to repair by such a day to those places, on pain of being struck off the half-pay list. These precautions would have been unnecessary, had they been deemed subject to martial law; and the penalty for non-obedience would not have been merely a privation of their pensions, but they would have fallen under the punishment of death, as deserters from the service. His lordship distinguished, with great propriety and precision, between a step which had been precipitately taken in a violent crisis, when the public was heated with apprehension and resentment, and a solemn law concerted at leisure, during the most profound tranquillity. Notwithstanding the spirited opposition of this nobleman, and some attempts to insert additional clauses, the bill having undergone a few inconsiderable amendments, passed by a very considerable majority.

BILL FOR LIMITING THE TERM OF A SOLDIER'S SERVICE.

Immediately after the mutiny-bill had passed the Lower House, another fruitless effort was made by the opposition. The danger of a standing army, on whose virtue the constitution of Great Britain seemed to depend, did not fail to alarm the minds of many who were zealously attached to the liberties of their country, and gave birth to a scheme, which, if executed, would have enabled the legislature to establish a militia that must have answered many national purposes, and acted as a constitutional bulwark against the excesses and ambition of a military standing force, under the immediate influence of government. The scheme which patriotism conceived was, in all probability, adopted by party. A bill was brought in, limiting the time beyond which no soldier, or non-commissioned officer, should be compelled to continue in the service. Had this limitation taken place, such a rotation of soldiers would have ensued among the common people, that in a few years every peasant, labourer, and inferior tradesman in the kingdom would have understood the exercise of arms; and perhaps the people in general would have concluded that a standing army was altogether unnecessary. A project of this nature could not, for obvious reasons, be agreeable to the administration, and therefore the bill was rendered abortive; for, after having been twice read, it was postponed from time to time, till the Parliament was prorogued, and never appeared in the sequel. Such were the chief subjects of debate between the ministry and the opposition, composed, as we have already observed, of the prince's servants and the remains of the country party, this last being headed by Lord Strange, son of the Earl of Derby, and Sir Francis Dashwood: the former, a nobleman of distin-

guished abilities, keen, penetrating, eloquent, and sagacious; the other frank, spirited, and sensible.

MEASURES TAKEN WITH RESPECT TO THE AFRICAN TRADE.

It must be owned, however, for the honour of the ministry, that if they carried a few unpopular measures with a high hand, they seemed earnestly desirous of making amends to the nation, by promoting divers regulations for the benefit and improvement of commerce, which actually took place in the ensuing session of Parliament. One of the principal objects of this nature which fell under their cognizance was the trade to the coast of Guinea; a very important branch of traffic, whether considered as a market of British manufactures, or as the source that supplied the English plantations with negroes. This was originally monopolized by a joint-stock company, which had from time to time derived considerable sums from the legislature, for enabling them the better to support certain forts or castles on the coast of Africa, to facilitate the commerce and protect the merchants. In the sequel, however, the exclusive privilege having been judged prejudicial to the national trade, the coast was laid open to all British subjects indiscriminately, on condition of their paying a certain duty towards defraying the expense of the forts and factories. This expedient did not answer the purposes for which it had been contrived. The separate traders, instead of receiving any benefit from the protection of the company, industriously avoided their castles, as the receptacles of tyranny and oppression. The company, whether from the misconduct or knavery of their directors, contracted such a load of debts as their stock was unable to discharge. They seemed to neglect the traffic, and allowed their castles to decay. In a word, their credit being exhausted, and

their creditors growing clamorous, they presented a petition to the House of Commons, disclosing their distresses, and imploring such assistance as should enable them not only to pay their debts, but also to maintain the forts in a defensible condition. This petition, recommended to the House in a message from his majesty, was corroborated by another in behalf of the company's creditors. Divers merchants of London, interested in the trade of Africa and the British plantations in America, petitioned the House, that, as the African trade was of the utmost importance to the nation, and could not be supported without forts and settlements, some effectual means should be speedily taken for protecting and extending this valuable branch of commerce. A fourth was offered by the merchants of Liverpool, representing that the security and protection of the trade of Africa must always principally depend upon his majesty's ships of war being properly stationed on that coast, and seasonably relieved; and that such forts and settlements as might be judged necessary, for marks of sovereignty and possession, would prove a nuisance and a burthen to the trade, should they remain in the hands of any joint-stock company, whose private interest always had been, and ever would be, found incompatible with the interest of the separate and open trader. They therefore prayed, that the said forts might either be taken into his majesty's immediate possession, and supported by the public, or committed to the merchants trading on that coast, in such a manner as the House should judge expedient, without vesting in them any other advantage, or right to the commerce, but what should be common to all his majesty's subjects. This remonstrance was succeeded by another, to the same effect, from the master, wardens, assistants, and commonalty of the society of merchant adventurers within the city of Bristol. All these petitions were referred to a committee appointed to deliberate on this subject;

who agreed to certain resolutions, implying, That the trade to Africa should be free and open; that the British forts and settlements on that coast ought to be maintained, and put under proper direction; and that, in order to carry on the African trade in the most beneficial manner to these kingdoms, all the British subjects trading to Africa should be united in one open company, without any joint-stock, or power to trade as a corporation. A bill was immediately founded on these resolutions, which alarmed the company to such a degree, that they had recourse to another petition, demonstrating their right to the coast of Africa, and expressing their reliance on the justice of the House, that they should not be deprived of their property without an adequate consideration. In a few days a second address was offered by their creditors, complaining of the company's mismanagement, promising to surrender their right, as the wisdom of Parliament should prescribe; praying that their debts might be inquired into; and that the equivalent to be granted for the company's possessions might be secured and applied, in the first place, for their benefit. The Commons, in consequence of this petition, ordered the company to produce a list of their debts, together with a copy of their charter, and two remonstrances, which their creditors had presented to them before this application to Parliament. A committee of the whole House, having deliberated on these papers and petitions, and heard the company by their counsel, resolved to give them a reasonable compensation for their charter, lands, forts, settlements, slaves, and effects, to be, in the first place, applied towards the payment of their creditors. A bill being formed accordingly, passed the Commons, and was conveyed to the Upper House, where a great many objections were started; and for the present it was dropped until a more unexceptionable plan should be concerted. In the mean time, their

lordships addressed his majesty, That the lords commissioners for trade and plantations might be directed to prepare a scheme on this subject, to be laid before both Houses of Parliament at the beginning of next session: That instant orders should be given for the preserving and securing the forts and settlements on the coast of Guinea belonging to Great Britain; and, That proper persons should be appointed to examine into the condition of those forts, as well as of the military stores, slaves, and vessels belonging to the African company, so as to make a faithful report of these particulars, with all possible expedition.

SCHEME FOR IMPROVING THE BRITISH FISHERY.

The ministry having professed an inclination, and indeed shown a disposition, to promote and extend the commerce of the kingdom, the Commons resolved to take some steps for encouraging the white fishery along the northern coast of the island, which is an inexhaustible source of wealth to our industrious neighbours the Dutch, who employ annually a great number of hands and vessels in this branch of commerce. The sensible part of the British people, reflecting on this subject, plainly foresaw that a fishery under due regulations, undertaken with the protection and encouragement of the legislature, would not only prove a fund of national riches, and a nursery of seamen; but likewise, in a great measure, prevent any future insurrections in the highlands of Scotland, by diffusing a spirit of industry among the natives of that country, who, finding it in their power to become independent on the fruits of their own labour, would soon enfranchise themselves from that slavish attachment, by which they had been so long connected with their landlords the chieftains. Accordingly, a committee was appointed

to deliberate on the state of the British fishery; and upon their report a bill was founded for encouraging the whale fishery on the coast of Spitzbergen, by a bounty of forty shillings per ton for every ship equipped for that undertaking. The bill having made its way through both Houses, and obtained the royal assent, the merchants in different parts of the kingdom, particularly in North Britain, began to build and fit out ships of great burthen, and peculiar structure, for the purposes of that fishery, which ever since hath been carried on with equal vigour and success. Divers merchants and traders of London having presented to the House of Commons a petition, representing the benefits that would accrue to the community from a herring and cod fishery, established on proper principles, and carried on with skill and integrity, this remonstrance was referred to a committee, upon whose resolutions a bill was formed; but, before this could be discussed in the House, the Parliament was prorogued, and of consequence this measure proved abortive.

ATTEMPT TO OPEN THE COMMERCE TO HUDSON'S BAY.

The next regulation proposed in favour of trade was that of laying open the commerce of Hudson's Bay, in the most northern parts of America, where a small monopoly maintained a few forts and settlements, and prosecuted a very advantageous fur-trade with the Indians of that continent. It was suggested, that the company had long ago enriched themselves by their exclusive privilege; that they employed no more than four annual ships; that, contrary to an express injunction in their charter, they discouraged all attempts to discover a north-west passage to the East Indies; that they dealt cruelly and perfidiously with the poor Indians, who never traded with them, except when compelled

by necessity, so that the best part of the fur-trade had devolved to the enemies of Great Britain; and that their exclusive patent restricted to very narrow limits a branch of commerce, which might be cultivated to a prodigious extent, as well as to the infinite advantage of Great Britain. Petitions, that the trade of Hudson's Bay might be laid open, were presented to the House by the merchants of London, Great Yarmouth, and Wolverhampton; and a committee was appointed to deliberate upon this subject. On the other hand, the company exerted themselves in petitions and private applications for their own preservation. The committee examined many papers and records; and the report was taken into consideration by the whole House. Many evidences were interrogated, and elaborate speeches made, on both sides of the question. At length a majority seemed satisfied that the traffic on the coast of Hudson's Bay could not be preserved without forts and settlements, which must be maintained either by an exclusive company, or at the public expense; and as this was not judged a proper juncture to encumber the nation with any charge of that kind, the design of dissolving the company was laid aside till a more favourable opportunity.

PLAN FOR MAINTAINING THE NAVY.

The government had, during the war, found great difficulty in pressing men for the service of the navy—a practice, which, however sanctioned by necessity, is nevertheless a flagrant encroachment on the liberty of the subject, and a violent outrage against the constitution of Great Britain. The ministry, therefore, had employed some of their agents to form a scheme for retaining in time of peace, by means of a certain allowance, a number of seamen who should be registered for the purpose, and be ready to man a squadron upon any

emergency. Such a plan, properly regulated, would have been a great advantage to commerce, which is always distressed by the practice of pressing seamen; and at the same time, a great security to the kingdom in dangerous conjunctures, when it may be necessary to equip an armament at a minute's warning. The House of Commons being moved upon this subject, agreed to divers resolutions, as a foundation for the bill; but the members in the opposition affecting to represent this measure in an odious light, as an imitation of the French method of registering seamen without their own consent, Mr. Pelham dropped it, as an unpopular project.

Information having been received that the French intended to settle the neutral islands of St. Lucia, Dominica, St. Vincent, and Tobago, in the West Indies, the nation had taken the alarm in the beginning of the year; and a motion was made in the House of Commons to address his majesty, that he would be graciously pleased to give directions for laying before the House copies of the instructions given to the governors of Barbadoes for ten years last past, so far as they related to these neutral islands; but whether the minister was conscious of a neglect in this particular, or thought such inquiries trenched upon the prerogative, he opposed the motion with all his might; and after some debate, the previous question passed in the negative. This was also the fate of another motion made by the Earl of E—t for an address, entreating his majesty would submit to the inspection of the House all the proposals of peace that had been made by the French king since the year which preceded the last rebellion, to that in which the definitive treaty was concluded at Aix-la-Chapelle. This they proposed as a previous step to the Parliament's forming any opinion concerning the utility or necessity of the peace which had been established. Violent debates ensued, in which the

opposition was as much excelled in oratory as outnumbered in votes. Such were the material transactions of this session, which in the month of June was closed as usual with a speech from the throne; in which his majesty signified his hope, that the Parliament, at their next meeting, would be able to perfect what they had now begun for advancing the trade and navigation of the kingdom. He likewise expressed his satisfaction at seeing public credit flourish at the end of an expensive war; and recommended unanimity as the surest bulwark of national security.

While the ministry, on some occasions, exhibited all the external signs of moderation and good humour; they, on others, manifested a spirit of jealousy and resentment, which seems to have been childish and illiberal. Two or three young riotous students at Oxford, trained up in prejudice, and heated with intemperance, uttered some expressions over their cups, implying their attachment to the family of the pretender. The report of this indiscretion was industriously circulated by certain worthless individuals, who, having no reliance on their own intrinsic merit, hoped to distinguish themselves as the tools of party, and to obtain favour with the ministry by acting as volunteers in the infamous practice of information. Though neither the rank, age, nor connexions of the delinquents were such as ought to have attracted the notice of the public, the vice-chancellor, heads of houses, and proctors of the university, knowing the invidious scrutiny to which their conduct was subjected, thought proper to publish a declaration, signifying their abhorrence of all seditious practices, their determined resolution to punish all offenders to the utmost severity and rigour of the statutes; and containing peremptory orders for the regulation of the university. Notwithstanding these wise and salutary precautions, the three boys, who, in the heat of their intoxication, had drank the pretender's

health, were taken into custody by a messenger of state; and two of them being tried in the court of King's Bench, and found guilty, were sentenced to walk through the courts of Westminster with a specification of their crime fixed to their foreheads; to pay a fine of five nobles each; to be imprisoned for two years, and find security for their good behaviour for the term of seven years after their enlargement. Many people thought they saw the proceedings of the Star-Chamber revived in the severity of this punishment. The administration, not yet satisfied with the vengeance which had been taken on these three striplings, seemed determined to stigmatize the university to which they belonged. The cry of jacobitism was loudly trumpeted against the whole community. The address of the university congratulating his majesty on the establishment of the peace was rejected with disdain, and an attempt was made to subject their statutes to the inspection of the king's council; but this rule, being argued in the court of King's Bench, was dismissed, in consequence of the opinions given by the judges. Finally, the same tribunal granted an information against Dr. Purnel, the vice-chancellor, for his behaviour in the case of the rioters above-mentioned; but this was countermanded in the sequel, his conduct appearing unexceptionable upon a more cool and impartial inquiry.

DUKE OF NEWCASTLE CHOSEN CHANCELLOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE.

In proportion as Oxford declined, her sister university rose in the favour of the administration, which she at this period cultivated by an extraordinary mark of compliance and attachment. The dignity of chancellor of the university being vacated by the death of the Duke of Somerset, the nation in general seemed

to think it would naturally devolve upon the Prince of Wales, as a compliment at all times due to that rank; but more especially to the then heir apparent, who had eminently distinguished himself by the virtues of a patriot and a prince. He had even pleased himself with the hope of receiving this mark of attachment from a seminary for which he entertained a particular regard. But the ruling members, seeing no immediate prospect of advantage in glorifying even a prince who was at variance with the ministry, wisely turned their eyes upon the illustrious character of the Duke of Newcastle, whom they elected without opposition, and installed with great magnificence; learning, poetry, and eloquence, joining their efforts in celebrating the shining virtues and extraordinary talents of their new patron.

Although opposition lay gasping at the feet of power in the House of Commons, the people of England did not yet implicitly approve all the measures of the administration; and the dregs of faction, still agitated by an internal ferment, threw up some ineffectual bubbles in different parts of the kingdom. Some of those who made no secret of their disaffection to the reigning family determined to manifest their resentment and contempt of certain noblemen and others, who were said to have abandoned their ancient principles, and to have sacrificed their consciences to their interest. Many individuals, animated by the fumes of inebriation, now loudly extolled that cause which they durst not avow when it required their open approbation and assistance; and, though they industriously avoided exposing their lives and fortunes to the chance of war in promoting their favourite interest when there was a possibility of success, they betrayed no apprehensions in celebrating the memory of its last effort, amidst the tumult of a riot, and the clamours of intemperance. In the neighbourhood of Lichfield the sportsmen of the party ap-

peared in the highland taste of variegated drapery; and their zeal descending to a very extraordinary exhibition of practical ridicule, they hunted, with hounds clothed in plaid, a fox dressed in a red uniform. Even the females at their assembly, and the gentlemen at the races, affected to wear the chequered stuff by which the prince-pretender and his followers had been distinguished. Divers noblemen on the course were insulted as apostates; and one personage, of high rank, is said to have undergone a very disagreeable flagellation.

SCHEME FOR A SETTLEMENT IN NOVA SCOTIA.

As the public generally suffers at the end of a war by the sudden dismission of a great number of soldiers and seamen, who, having contracted a habit of idleness, and finding themselves without employment and the means of subsistence, engage in desperate courses, and prey upon the community, it was judged expedient to provide an opening, through which these unquiet spirits might exhale without damage to the commonwealth. The most natural was that of encouraging them to become members of a new colony in North America, which, by being properly regulated, supported, and improved, might be the source of great advantages to its mother country. Many disputes had arisen between the subjects of England and France, concerning the limits of Nova Scotia, which no treaty had as yet properly ascertained. A fort had been raised, and a small garrison maintained, by the king of Great Britain, at a part of this very country, called Annapolis Royal, to overawe the French neutrals settled in the neighbourhood; but this did not answer the purpose for which it was intended. Upon every rupture or dispute between the two crowns, these planters, forgetting their

neutrality, intrigued with the Indians, communicated intelligence to their own countrymen, settled at St. John's and Cape Breton, and did all the ill offices their hatred could suggest against the colonies and subjects of Great Britain. A scheme was now formed for making a new establishment on the same peninsula, which should further confirm and extend the property and dominion of the crown of Great Britain in that large tract of country, clear the uncultivated grounds, constitute communities, diffuse the benefits of population and agriculture, and improve the fishery of that coast, which might be rendered a new source of wealth and commerce to Old England. The particulars of the plan being duly considered, it was laid before his majesty, who approved of the design, and referred the execution of it to the board of trade and plantations, over which the Earl of Halifax presided. This nobleman, endued by nature with an excellent capacity, which had been diligently and judiciously cultivated, animated with liberal sentiments, and fired with an eager spirit of patriotism, adopted the plan with the most generous ardour, and cherished the infant colony with paternal affection. The commissioners for trade and plantations immediately advertised, under the sanction of his majesty's authority, That proper encouragement would be given to such of the officers and private men, lately dismissed from the land and sea service, as were willing to settle, with or without families, in the province of Nova Scotia: that the fee-simple, or perpetual property, of fifty acres of land should be granted to every private soldier or seaman, free from the payment of any quit-rents or taxes, for the term of ten years; at the expiration of which no person should pay more than one shilling per annum for every fifty acres so granted: that, over and above these fifty, each person should receive a grant of ten acres for every individual, including women and children, of which his family

should consist: that further grants should be made to them as the number should increase, and in proportion as they should manifest their abilities in agriculture: that every officer, under the rank of ensign in the land-service, or lieutenant in the navy, should be gratified with fourscore acres on the same conditions: that two hundred acres should be bestowed upon ensigns, three hundred upon lieutenants, four hundred upon captains, and six hundred on every officer above that degree, with proportionable considerations for the number and increase of every family: that the lands should be parcelled out as soon as possible after the arrival of the colonists, and a civil government established; by virtue of which they should enjoy all the liberties and privileges of British subjects, with proper security and protection: that the settlers, with their families, should be conveyed to Nova Scotia, and maintained for twelve months after their arrival at the expense of the government; which should also supply them with arms and ammunition, as far as should be judged necessary for their defence, with proper materials and utensils for clearing and cultivating their land, erecting habitations, exercising the fishery, and such other purposes as should be judged necessary for their support.

TOWN OF HALIFAX FOUNDED.

The scheme was so feasible, and the encouragement so inviting, that in a little time about four thousand adventurers, with their families, were entered, according to the directions of the board of trade, who in the beginning of May set sail from England, under the command of Colonel Cornwallis, whom the king had appointed their governor, and towards the latter end of June arrived at the place of their destination, which was the harbour of Chebuctou, on the sea-coast of the peninsula, about midway between Cape Canceau and

Cape Sable. It is one of the most secure and commodious havens in the whole world, and well situated for the fishery; yet the climate is cold, the soil barren, and the whole country covered with woods, of birch, fir, pine, and some oak, unfit for the purposes of timber; but at the same time extremely difficult to remove and extirpate. Governor Cornwallis no sooner arrived in this harbour than he was joined by two regiments of infantry from Cape Breton, and a company of rangers from Annapolis. Then he pitched upon a spot for the settlement, and employed his people in clearing the ground for laying the foundations of a town; but some inconveniences being discovered in this situation, he chose another to the northward, hard by the harbour, on an easy ascent, commanding a prospect of the whole peninsula, and well supplied with rivulets of fresh and wholesome water. Here he began to build a town on a regular plan, to which he gave the name of Halifax, in honour of the nobleman who had the greatest share in founding the colony; and before the approach of winter above three hundred comfortable wooden houses were built, the whole surrounded by a strong palisade. This colony, however, has by no means answered the sanguine expectations of the projectors; for notwithstanding the ardour with which the interests of it were promoted by its noble patron, and the repeated indulgence it has reaped from the bounty of the legislature, the inhabitants have made little or no progress in agriculture: the fishery is altogether neglected, and the settlement entirely subsists on the sums expended by the individuals of the army and navy, whose duty obliges them to reside in this part of North America.

FRENCH ATTEMPTS TO SETTLE THE ISLAND OF TOBAGO.

The establishment of such a powerful colony in Nova Scotia could not fail giving umbrage to the French in that neighbourhood, who, though they did not think proper to promulgate their jealousy and disgust, nevertheless employed their emissaries clandestinely in stimulating and exciting the Indians to harass the colonists with hostilities, in such a manner as should effectually hinder them from extending their plantations, and perhaps induce them to abandon the settlement. Nor was this the only part of America in which the French court countenanced such perfidious practices. More than ever convinced of the importance of a considerable navy, and an extensive plantation trade, they not only exerted uncommon industry in re-establishing their marine, which had suffered so severely during the war; but they resolved, if possible, to extend their plantations in the West Indies, by settling the neutral islands, which we have already mentioned. In the beginning of the year the governor of Barbadoes, having received intelligence that the French had begun to settle the island of Tobago, sent Captain Tyrrel thither in a frigate, to learn the particulars. That officer found above three hundred men already landed, secured by two batteries and two ships of war, and in daily expectation of a further reinforcement from the Marquis de Caylus, governor of Martinique; who had published an ordonnance, authorizing the subjects of the French king to settle the island of Tobago, and promising to defend them from the attempts of all their enemies. This assurance was in answer to a proclamation issued by Mr. Grenville, governor of Barbadoes, and stuck up in the different parts of the island, commanding all the inhabitants to remove, in thirty days, on pain of under-

going military execution. Captain Tyrrel, with a spirit that became a commander in the British navy, gave the French officers to understand, that his most christian majesty had no right to settle the island, which was declared neutral by treaties; and that, if they would not desist, he should be obliged to employ force in driving them from their new settlement. Night coming on, and Mr. Tyrrel's ship falling to leeward, the French captain seized that opportunity of sailing to Martinique; and next day the English commander returned to Barbadoes, having no power to commit hostilities. These tidings, with a copy of the French governor's ordonnance, were no sooner transmitted to the ministry, than they despatched a courier to the English envoy at Paris, with directions to make representations to the court of Versailles on this subject. The ministry of France, knowing they were in no condition to support the consequences of an immediate rupture, and understanding how much the merchants and people of Great Britain were alarmed and incensed at their attempts to possess these islands, thought proper to disown the proceedings of the Marquis de Caylus, and to grant the satisfaction that was demanded, by sending him orders to discontinue the settlement, and evacuate the island of Tobago. At the same time, however, that the court of Versailles made this sacrifice for the satisfaction of England, the Marquis de Puysieux, the French minister, observed to the English resident, that France was undoubtedly in possession of that island towards the middle of the last century. He ought in candour to have added, that although Louis XIV. made a conquest of this island from the Hollanders, during his war with that republic, it was restored to them by the treaty of Nimeguen, and since that time France could not have the least shadow of a claim to number it among her settlements. It was before this answer could be obtained from the court of Versailles, that the motion, of

which we have already taken notice, was made in the House of Commons, relating to the subject of the neutral islands; a motion discouraged by the court, and defeated by the majority.

REJOICINGS FOR THE PEACE OF AIX-LA-CHAPELLE.

The peace of Aix-la-Chapelle was celebrated by fireworks, illuminations, and rejoicings, in which the English, French, and Dutch, seemed to display a spirit of emulation in point of taste and magnificence; and, in all probability, these three powers were sincerely pleased at the cessation of the war. England enjoyed a respite from intolerable supplies, exorbitant insurance, and interrupted commerce; Holland was delivered from the brink of a French invasion: and France had obtained a breathing time for re-establishing her naval power, for exerting that spirit of intrigue, by dint of which she hath often embroiled her neighbours, and for executing plans of insensible encroachment, which might prove more advantageous than the progress of open hostilities. In the affair of Tobago the French king had manifested his inclination to avoid immediate disputes with England; and had exhibited another proof of the same disposition in his behaviour to the prince-pretender, who had excited such a dangerous rebellion in the island of Great Britain.

PRETENDER'S ELDEST SON ARRESTED AT PARIS.

Among those princes and powers who excepted against different articles of the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, the Chevalier de St. George, foreseeing that none of the plenipotentiaries would receive his protest, employed his agents to fix it up in the public places of

Aix-la-Chapelle; a precaution of very little service to his cause, which all the states of Christendom seemed now to have abandoned. So little was the interest of his family considered in this negotiation, that the contracting powers agreed, without reserve, to a literal insertion of the fifth article of the quadruple alliance; by which it was stipulated, that neither the pretender nor any of his descendants should be allowed to reside within the territories belonging to any of the subscribing parties. At the same time the plenipotentiaries of France promised to those of Great Britain, that Prince Charles-Edward should be immediately obliged to quit the dominions of his most christian majesty. Notice of this agreement was accordingly given by the court of Versailles to the young adventurer, and as he had declared he would never return to Italy, Mons. de Courteille, the French envoy to the Cantons of Switzerland, was directed by his sovereign to demand an asylum for Prince Edward in the city of Fribourg. The regency having complied in this particular with the earnest request of his most christian majesty, Mr. Barnaby, the British minister to the Helvetic body, took the alarm, and presented the magistracy of Fribourg with a remonstrance, couched in such terms as gave offence to that regency, and drew upon him a severe answer. In vain had the French king exerted his influence in procuring this retreat for the young pretender, who, being pressed with repeated messages to withdraw, persisted in refusing to quit the place, to which he had been so cordially invited by his cousin the King of France, and where he said that monarch had solemnly promised, on the word of a king, that he would never forsake him in his distress, nor abandon the interests of his family. Louis was not a little perplexed at this obstinacy of Prince Edward, which was the more vexatious, as that youth appeared to be the darling of the Parisians; who not only admired him

for his own accomplishments, and pitied him for his sufferings, but also revered him, as a young hero lineally descended from their renowned Henry the fourth. At length, the two English noblemen arriving at Paris, as hostages for the performance of the treaty, and seeing him appear at all public places of diversion, complained of this circumstance, as an insult to their sovereign, and an infringement of the treaty so lately concluded. The French king, after some hesitation between punctilio and convenience, resolved to employ violence upon the person of this troublesome stranger, since milder remonstrances had not been able to influence his conduct; but this resolution was not taken till the return of a courier whom he despatched to the Chevalier de St. George; who being thus informed of his son's deportment, wrote a letter to him, laying strong injunctions upon him to yield to the necessity of the times, and acquiesce with a good grace in the stipulations which his cousin of France had found it necessary to subscribe for the interest of his realm. Edward, far from complying with this advice and injunction, signified his resolution to remain in Paris; and even declared, that he would pistol any man who should presume to lay violent hands on his person. In consequence of this bold declaration, an extraordinary council was held at Versailles, when it was determined to arrest him without further delay, and the whole plan of this enterprise was finally adjusted. That same evening, the prince entering the narrow lane that leads to the opera, the barrier was immediately shut, and the serjeant of the guard called "To arms;" on which Monsieur de Vaudreuil, exempt of the French guards, advancing to Edward, "Prince (said he), I arrest you in the king's name, by virtue of this order." At that instant the youth was surrounded by four grenadiers, in order to prevent any mischief he might have done with a case of pocket-pistols which he always carried about

him; and a guard was placed at all the avenues and doors of the opera-house, lest any tumult should have ensued among the populace. These precautions being taken, Vaudreuil, with an escort, conducted the prisoner through the garden of the Palais Royal to a house where the Duke de Biron waited with a coach and six to convey him to the castle of Vincennes, whither he was immediately accompanied by a detachment from the regiment of French guards, under the command of that nobleman. He had not remained above three days in his confinement when he gave the French ministry to understand, that he would conform himself to the king's intentions; and was immediately enlarged upon giving his word and honour that he would, without delay, retire from the dominions of France. Accordingly, he set out in four days from Fontainebleau, attended by three officers, who conducted him as far as Pont-Bauvosin on the frontiers, where they took their leave of him, and returned to Versailles. He proceeded for some time in the road to Chamberri; but soon returned into the French dominions, and, passing through Dauphiné, repaired to Avignon, where he was received with extraordinary honours by the pope's legate. In the mean time, his arrest excited great murmurings at Paris; the inhabitants blaming, without scruple, their king's conduct in this instance, as a scandalous breach of hospitality, as well as a mean proof of condescension to the king of England; and many severe pasquinades relating to this transaction were fixed up in the most public places of that metropolis.

APPEARANCE OF A RUPTURE BETWEEN RUSSIA AND SWEDEN.

Although peace was now re-established among the principal powers of the continent, yet another storm seemed ready to burst upon the northern parts of Eu-

rope, in a fresh rupture between Russia and Sweden. Whether the czarina had actually obtained information that the French faction meditated some revolution of government at Stockholm, or she wanted a pretence for annexing Finland to her empire; certain it is, she affected to apprehend that the prince-successor of Sweden waited only for the decease of the reigning king, who was very old and infirm, to change the form of government, and resume that absolute authority which some of the monarchs, his predecessors, had enjoyed. She seemed to think that a prince thus vested with arbitrary power, and guided by the councils of France and Prussia, with which Sweden had lately engaged in close alliance, might become a very troublesome and dangerous neighbour to her in the Baltic; she, therefore, recruited her armies, repaired her fortifications, filled her magazines, ordered a strong body of troops to advance towards the frontiers of Finland, and declared in plain terms to the court of Stockholm, that if any step should be taken to alter the government, which she had bound herself by treaty to maintain, her troops should enter the territory of Sweden, and she would act up to the spirit of her engagements. The Swedish ministry, alarmed at these peremptory proceedings, had recourse to their allies; and, in the mean time, made repeated declarations to the court of Petersburgh, that there was no design to make the least innovation in the nature of their established government; but little or no regard being paid to these representations, they began to put the kingdom in a posture of defence; and the old king gave the czarina to understand, that if, notwithstanding the satisfaction he had offered, her forces should pass the frontiers of Finland, he would consider their march as an hostile invasion, and employ the means which God had put in his power for the defence of his dominions.

INTERPOSITION OF THE KING OF PRUSSIA.

This declaration in all probability did not produce such effect as the interposition of his Prussian majesty, the most enterprising prince of his time, at the head of one hundred and forty thousand of the best troops that Germany ever trained. Perhaps he was not sorry that the Empress of Muscovy furnished him with a plausible pretence for maintaining such a formidable army, after the peace of Europe had been ascertained by a formal treaty, and all the surrounding states had diminished the number of their forces. He now wrote a letter to his uncle the King of Great Britain, complaining of the insults and menaces which had been offered by the czarina to Sweden; declaring, that he was bound by a defensive alliance, to which France had acceded, to defend the government at present established in Sweden; and that he would not sit still, and tamely see that kingdom attacked by any power whatsoever without acting up to his engagements: he therefore entreated his Britannic majesty to interpose his good offices, in conjunction with France and him, to compromise the disputes which threatened to embroil the northern parts of Europe. By this time the Russian army had approached the frontiers of Finland; the Swedes had assembled their troops, replenished their magazines, and repaired their marine; and the King of Denmark, jealous of the czarina's designs with regard to the duchy of Sleswick, which was contested with him by the prince-successor of Russia, kept his army and navy on the most respectable footing. At this critical juncture, the courts of London, Versailles, and Berlin co-operated so effectually by remonstrances and declarations at Petersburgh and Stockholm, that the Empress of Russia thought proper to own herself satisfied, and all those clouds of trouble were immediately dispersed. Yet, in all probability, her

real aim was disappointed; and, however she might dissemble her sentiments, she never heartily forgave the King of Prussia for the share he had in this transaction. That monarch, without relaxing in his attention to the support of a very formidable military power, exerted very extraordinary endeavours in cultivating the civil interests of his country. He reformed the laws of Brandenburgh, and rescued the administration of justice from the frauds of chicanery. He encouraged the arts of agriculture and manufacture; and even laid the foundation of naval commerce, by establishing an East India company in the port of Embden.

Nor did the French ministry neglect any measure that might contribute to repair the damage which the kingdom had sustained in the course of the war. One half of the army was disbanded; the severe imposition of the tenth penny was suspended by the king's edict; a scheme of economy was proposed, with respect to the finances; and the utmost diligence used in procuring materials, as well as workmen, for ship-building, that the navy of France might speedily retrieve its former importance. In the midst of these truly patriotic schemes, the court of Versailles betrayed a littleness of genius, and spirit of tyranny, joined to fanaticism, in quarrelling with their Parliament about superstitious forms of religion. The sacraments had been denied to a certain person on his deathbed, because he refused to subscribe to the bull Unigenitus. The nephew of the defunct preferred a complaint to the Parliament, whose province it was to take cognizance of the affair: a deputation of that body attended the king with the report of the resolutions; and his majesty commanded them to suspend all proceedings relating to a matter of such consequence, concerning which he would take an opportunity of signifying his royal pleasure. This interposition was the source of disputes between the crown

and Parliament, which had like to have filled the whole kingdom with intestine troubles.

CONDUCT OF DIFFERENT EUROPEAN POWERS.

At Vienna the empress-queen was not more solicitous in promoting the trade and internal manufactures of her dominions, by sumptuary regulations, necessary restrictions on foreign superfluities, by opening her ports in the Adriatic, and giving proper encouragement to commerce, than she was careful and provident in reforming the economy of her finances, maintaining a respectable body of forces, and guarding, by defensive alliances, against the enterprises of his Prussian majesty, on whose military power she looked with jealousy and distrust. In Holland, all the authority and influence of the stadtholder were scarcely sufficient to allay the ferments excited among the people, by the provisional taxation which had succeeded the abolition of the pachters, and was indeed very grievous to the subject. As this was no more than a temporary expedient, the Prince of Orange proposed a more equitable plan, which was approved by the States, and established with great difficulty. In Italy the system of politics seemed to change its complexion. The King of Sardinia effected a match between one of the Infantas of Spain and the Prince of Piedmont; and whether irritated by the conduct of the Austrians in the last war, or apprehensive of such a powerful neighbour in the Milanese, he engaged with the Kings of France and Spain in a defensive alliance, comprehending the King of the Two Sicilies, the Republic of Genoa, and the Dukes of Modena and Parma. His most catholic majesty, sincerely disposed to cultivate the arts of peace, and encourage every measure that could contribute to the advantage of his country, was no sooner released from the embarrassments of war,

ISLINGTON PUBLIC LIBRARIES

George the Second.

Anno 1748.

A revolution having lately happened in Algiers, Muley Abdallah, the reigning ruffian, insisted upon Mr. Latton the ambassador's paying a pretended balance for the ransom of some captives, as well as depositing a considerable sum which had already been paid to a deceased Bashaw; alleging that, as he, the Emperor, received no part of it, the payment was illegal. Mr. Latton refusing to comply with this arbitrary demand, his house was surrounded by a detachment of soldiers, who dragged his secretary from his presence, and threw him into a dismal subterraneous dungeon, where he continued twenty days.

than he began to execute plans of internal economy; to reduce unnecessary pensions, discharge the debts contracted in the war, replenish his arsenals, augment his navy, promote manufactures, and encourage an active commerce by sea, the benefits of which the kingdom of Spain had not known since the first discovery and conquest of the West Indies.

INSOLENCE OF THE BARBARY CORSAIRS.

The preparations for refitting and increasing the navy of Spain were carried on with such extraordinary vigour, that other nations believed an expedition was intended against the corsairs of Algiers, who had for some time grievously infested the trade and coasts of the Mediterranean. The existence of this and other predatory republics, which entirely subsist upon piracy and rapine, petty states of barbarous ruffians, maintained as it were in the midst of powerful nations, which they insult with impunity, and of which they even exact an annual contribution, is a flagrant reproach upon Christendom; a reproach the greater, as it is founded upon a low, selfish, illiberal maxim of policy. All the powers that border on the Mediterranean, except France and Tuscany, are at perpetual war with the Moors of Barbary, and for that reason obliged to employ foreign ships for the transportation of their merchandise. This employment naturally devolves to those nations, whose vessels are in no danger from the depredations of the barbarians; namely, the subjects of the maritime powers, who, for this puny advantage, not only tolerate the piratical states of Barbary, but even supply them with arms and ammunition, solicit their passes, and purchase their forbearance with annual presents, which are, in effect, equivalent to a tribute: whereas, by one vigorous exertion of their power, they might destroy all their ships, lay their towns in ashes, and totally extirpate those pernicious

broods of desperate banditti. Even all the condescension of those who disgrace themselves with the title of allies to these miscreants is not always sufficient to restrain them from acts of cruelty and rapine. At this very period four cruisers from Algiers made a capture of an English packet-boat, in her voyage from Lisbon, and conveyed her to their city, where she was plundered of money and effects to the amount of one hundred thousand pounds, and afterwards dismissed. In consequence of this outrage, Commodore Keppel was sent with seven ships of war to demand satisfaction, as well as to compromise certain differences which had arisen on account of arrears claimed of the English by the Dey of Algiers. The Musselman frankly owned that the money having been divided among the captors could not possibly be refunded. The commodore returned to Gibraltar; and in the sequel, an Algerine ambassador arrived in London with some presents of wild beasts for his Britannic majesty. This transaction was succeeded by another injurious affront offered by the governor or alcayde of Tetuan to Mr. Latton, an English ambassador, sent thither to redeem the British subjects, who had been many years enslaved in the dominions of the King of Morocco. A revolution having lately happened in this empire, Muley Abdallah, the reigning ruffian, insisted upon the ambassador's paying a pretended balance for the ransom of the captives, as well as depositing a considerable sum, which had already been paid to a deceased bashaw; alleging, that as he (the emperor) received no part of it, the payment was illegal. Mr. Latton refusing to comply with this arbitrary demand, his house was surrounded by a detachment of soldiers, who violently dragged his secretary from his presence, and threw him into a dismal subterranean dungeon, where he continued twenty days. The English slaves, to the number of twenty-seven, were condemned to the same fate; the ambassador himself was degraded from

his character, deprived of his allowance, and sequestered from all communication. All the letters directed to him were intercepted, and interpreted to the alcayde: two negro porters were intrusted with the keys of all his apartments, and a couple of soldiers posted at his chamber-door; nay, this Moorish governor threatened to load him with irons, and violently seized part of the presents designed by his Britannic majesty for the emperor. At length, finding that neither Mr. Latton nor the Governor of Gibraltar, to whom he had written, would deposit the money, without fresh instructions from the court of London, the barbarian thought proper to relax in his severity: the prisoners were enlarged, the restrictions removed from the person of the ambassador, and, after all these indignities offered to the honour of the British nation, the balance was paid, and the affair quietly adjusted.

DISTURBANCES IN ENGLAND.

Britain, in the meanwhile, was altogether barren of events which might deserve a place in a general history. Commerce and manufacture flourished again to such a degree of increase as had never been known in the island; but this advantage was attended with an irresistible tide of luxury and excess, which flowed through all degrees of the people, breaking down all the mounds of civil polity, and opening a way for licence and immorality. The highways were infested with rapine and assassination; the cities teemed with the brutal votaries of lewdness, intemperance, and profligacy. The whole land was overspread with a succession of tumult, riot, and insurrection, excited in different parts of the kingdom by the erection of new turnpikes, which the legislature judged necessary for the convenience of inland carriage. In order to quell these disturbances,

recourse was had to the military power; several individuals were slain, and some were executed as examples.

SESSION OPENED.

In the month of November the session of Parliament was opened with a speech from the throne, in which his majesty expressed a particular pleasure in meeting them at a time when the perfect re-establishment of a general peace had restored to his people the blessings of quiet and tranquillity. He said, the good effects of these already appeared in the flourishing condition of national commerce, and in the rise of public credit, which were the foundations of strength and prosperity to these kingdoms. He declared that, during the summer, he had used every opportunity of cementing and securing the peace; that it was his firm resolution to do every thing in his power for the preservation of it, and religiously adhere to the engagements into which he had entered. Finally, he took notice of the good disposition he had found in the other contracting parties to the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle to cherish the public tranquillity of Europe; and he earnestly recommended to the two Houses the maintenance of a strong naval power, as the bulwark of national security.

When the motion was made for an address of thanks in the House of Commons, the first paragraph of his majesty's speech furnished the opposition with a handle to declaim against the late treaty. Sir John Hynde Cotton observed, that the peace could not be properly styled complete, as nothing had been stipulated with respect to the article of "no search;" alluding to the interruption our commerce had sustained from the Spaniards in the West Indies; a stipulation, without which both Houses of Parliament had formerly voted that

there should be no peace with that kingdom. In the present conjuncture of affairs such an objection savoured rather of party than of patriotism; and indeed Sir John declared, that the remarks he made upon the occasion were rather in discharge of the duty he owed to his country, than in hope of seeing his sentiments espoused by the majority. Some sharp altercation was used in the debate which arose on this subject; and many severe invectives were levelled at those who negotiated, as well as at those who approved and confirmed the treaty. But Mr. Pelham, who sustained the whole weight of the debate on the side of administration, answered every objection with equal candour and ability; and if he failed in proving that the terms of peace were as favourable as could be expected, considering the unfortunate events of the war, and the situation of the contending powers; he at least demonstrated, that it would be the interest of the kingdom to acquiesce for the present in the treaty which had been concluded, and endeavoured to remedy its imperfections by subsequent conventions, amicably opened among those powers between whom any cause of dispute remained. With respect to the vote of both Houses, mentioned by Sir John Hynde Cotton, he declared that he had never approved of that step when it was first taken; or, if he had, times and circumstances, which could not be foreseen, would have justified his deviating from it in the re-establishment of peace. He reminded them, that a Parliament of Great Britain had once voted "no peace while any part of the West Indies should remain in possession of the Spanish king;" yet a train of incidents, which they could not possibly foresee, afterwards rendered it expedient to adopt a peace, without insisting upon the accomplishment of that condition. In a word, we must own, that in the majority of debates excited in the course of this session, the ministry derived their triumphs from the force of reason, as well

as from the weight of influence. We shall always, however, except the efforts that were made for reducing the number of land-forces to fifteen thousand, and maintaining a greater number of seamen than the ministry proposed. On these constitutional points the Earl of Egmont, and the other chiefs of the opposition, expatiated with all the energy of eloquence, which, however, was frustrated by the power of superior numbers. Ten thousand seamen were voted for the service of the ensuing year, notwithstanding his majesty's injunction to maintain a considerable navy; and the number of land-forces was continued at eighteen thousand eight hundred and fifty-seven. The sums granted for making good his majesty's engagements with the Electors of Bavaria and Mentz, and the Duke of Brunswick Wolfenbuttle, amounted to fifty-three thousand two hundred and twenty-five pounds sterling. The services done by the colonies in North America, during the war, were gratified with the sum of one hundred twenty-two thousand two hundred forty-six pounds. The expense incurred by the new colony of Nova Scotia exceeded seventy-six thousand pounds. A small sum was voted for the improvement of Georgia; and ten thousand pounds were granted towards the support of the British forts and settlements on the coast of Africa. The sum total granted in this session arose to four millions one hundred forty-one thousand six hundred sixty-one pounds nine shillings and eleven pence half-penny, to be raised by the land-tax, at three shillings in the pound; the malt, and other duties, the surplus of divers impositions remaining in the bank and exchequer; one million by annuities, at three per cent. charged on the sinking fund, until redeemed by Parliament; and nine hundred thousand pounds out of the excess or overplus of moneys denominated the sinking-fund.

SCHEME FOR REDUCING THE INTEREST OF THE NATIONAL DEBT.

But the capital measure which distinguished this session of Parliament was the reduction of the interest on the public funds; a scheme which was planned and executed by the minister, without any national disturbance or disquiet, to the astonishment of all Europe; the different nations of which could not comprehend how it would be possible for the government, at the close of a long and expensive war, which had so considerably drained the country, and augmented the enormous burthen of national debt, to find money for paying off such of the public creditors as might choose to receive the principal, rather than submit to a reduction of the interest. It was not very much for the honour of the opposition, that some of its leading members endeavoured to impede this great machine of civil economy, by taking opportunities of affirming in Parliament, in opposition to his majesty's speech, that the nation, far from being in a flourishing condition, was almost entirely exhausted; that commerce drooped and declined; that public credit stood tottering on the brink of ruin; and that all the treaties lately concluded among the different powers of Europe were, in effect, disadvantageous and prejudicial to the interests of Great Britain. In answer to these assertions, Mr. Pelham undertook to prove, from the register of exports and imports, that the commerce of the kingdom was more extensive at this than at any former period; and that the public credit was strong enough to admit of an experiment, which he would not presume to hazard, except upon a moral certainty of its being firmly rooted, beyond the power of accident and faction to shake or overturn. He declared, that his design of reducing the interest upon the funds was the result of the love he bore his

country, and an opinion that it was the duty of the servants of the crown to ease the burthens of the people. He said he had conferred on this subject with persons of the most approved knowledge and undoubted experience; and chose to promulgate the method proposed for alleviating the load of the national debt, that the public, in knowing the particulars of the scheme, might have time to consider them at leisure, and start such objections as should occur to their reflection, before it might be too late to adopt amendments. He observed, that nothing could more clearly demonstrate the vigour of public credit, and the augmentation of national commerce, than the price of stock, which had within three years risen to a very considerable increase; and the duties on imports, which in nine months had added one million to the sinking-fund, notwithstanding a very extraordinary sum which had been paid as bounties for exported corn. He expressed great tenderness and regard for the interests of those who had advanced their money for the service of the government; declaring that his aim was to contrive a fair, honest, and equitable method for lessening the national incumbrances, by lowering the interest, conformable to parliamentary faith, and agreeable to the rules of eternal justice. His plan was accordingly communicated, canvassed, and approved in the House of Commons, and an act passed for reducing the interest of the funds which constitute the national debt [a]. In pursuance of this act, for the reduction of the interest, the greater part of the creditors complied with the terms proposed, and subscribed their respective annuities before the end of February; but the three great companies at first kept aloof, and refused to subscribe any part of their capital.

About the middle of March the Commons ordered

[a] See note [A], vol. vi.

the proper officers to lay before them an account of the sums which had been subscribed, and these were taken into consideration by a committee of the whole House. It was then that Mr. Pelham, as chancellor of the exchequer, observed, that besides the debts due to the three great companies in their corporate capacity, all the rest, carrying four per centum interest, had been subscribed, except about eight or nine millions, the proprietors of which had forfeited the favour designed them by Parliament; but as many of these had been misled by evil counsellors, who perhaps were more intent on distressing the government, than solicitous to serve their friends; and as many were foreigners, residing beyond sea, who had not time to take proper advice, and give the necessary instructions; and as these could not possibly be distinguished from such as refuse to subscribe from mere obstinacy or disaffection, it might be thought cruel to take the most rigorous advantage of the forfeiture they had incurred. With respect to the proprietors of the stock or capital belonging to the three great companies, he asserted, that many of them would willingly have subscribed their properties within the time limited, but were necessarily excluded by the majority on the ballot; and as it was equally impossible to know those who were against the question on the ballot, he thought that some tenderness was due even to the proprietors of those three companies: his opinion, therefore, was, that they and the uncomplying annuitants should be indulged with further time to complete their subscriptions; but, in order to preserve the authority of Parliament, and the respect due to that august assembly, they ought not to be gratified with such advantageous terms as were allowed to the annuitants who at first cheerfully complied with the proposals offered by the legislature. For these reasons he proposed, that although the term of subscribing should be protracted till the thirtieth day of May, the encourage-

ment of three pounds ten shillings per centum per annum should not be continued to the second subscribers longer than till the fifth day of December, in the year one thousand seven hundred and fifty-five. The proposal being approved, a bill was framed for this purpose, as well as for redeeming such annuities as should not be subscribed, which passed through both Houses, and was enacted into a law, after having received an additional clause, empowering the East India company, in case they should subscribe all their stock bearing an interest of four per centum, to borrow, with the consent of the treasury, any sums not exceeding four millions two hundred thousand pounds, after the several rates of interest before proposed to be paid by the public, and one million more at three per centum per annum. They were also vested with a power to raise money by bonds as formerly; yet so as the whole, including the annuities, should not exceed what they were by former acts empowered to borrow. The objections to the execution of this project, which by many were deemed insurmountable, entirely vanished before the fortitude, perseverance, and caution of the minister; who had secured, among the monied men of the nation, the promise of such sums as would have been sufficient to pay off the capital belonging to those creditors who might refuse to accept the interest thus reduced. The second subscription had the desired effect. The three great companies acquiesced, and their example was followed by the other scrupulous annuitants; the national burthen was comfortably lightened, and the sinking-fund considerably increased, without producing the least perplexity or disturbance in the commonwealth; a circumstance that could not fail to excite the admiration and envy of all Christendom.

NEW MUTINY BILL.

The mutiny-bill for the ensuing year was mitigated with an essential alteration, relating to the oath of secrecy imposed upon the members of every court-martial, who were now released from this reserve, if required to give evidence, by due course of law, in any court of judicature; and whereas, by the former mutiny-bill, a general was empowered to order the revisal of any sentence by a court-martial as often as he pleased, and, on that pretence, to keep in confinement a man who had been acquitted upon a fair trial, it was now enacted, that no sentence pronounced by any court-martial, and signed by the president, should be more than once liable to revisal. Colonel George Townshend, son of Lord Viscount Townshend, who had equally distinguished himself by his civil and military accomplishments, proposed another clause, for preventing any non-commissioned officer being broke or reduced into the ranks; or any soldier being punished, but by the sentence of a court-martial. He gave the House to understand, that certain persons attended at the door, who from the station of non-commissioned officers had been broke, and reduced into the ranks, without trial, or any cause assigned; and he expatiated not only upon the iniquity of such proceedings, but also upon the danger of leaving such arbitrary power in the hands of any individual officer. A warm debate was the consequence of this motion, which, however, was over-ruled by the majority.

BILL FOR ENCOURAGING THE IMPORTATION OF IRON FROM AMERICA.

Among other regulations made in the course of this session for the encouragement of the British manufac-

tures, a large duty was laid upon Irish sail-cloth, which being sold at an under price, was found to interfere with the same species of commodity fabricated in the island of Great Britain; and, for the further benefit of this last, the bounty upon the exportation of it, which had been deducted from a defective fund, was now made payable out of the customs. This measure, however, was not of such importance to the nation, as the act which they passed for encouraging the importation of pig and bar-iron from the British colonies in North America. Every well-wisher to his country reflected with concern on the nature of the British trade with Sweden, from which kingdom the subjects of his Britannic majesty imported more iron and steel than all the other countries in Europe. For this article they paid a very great balance in ready money, which the Swedes again expended in purchasing from the French, and other mercantile powers, those necessaries and superfluities with which they might have been as cheaply furnished by Great Britain. In the mean time the English colonies in America were restricted by severe duties from making advantage of their own produce, in exchanging their iron for such commodities as they were under the necessity of procuring from their mother-country. Such restriction was not only a cruel grievance upon our own settlements, but also attended with manifest prejudice to the interest of Great Britain, annually drained of great sums, in favour of an ungrateful nation, from which no part of them returned; whereas the iron imported from America must of necessity come in exchange for our own manufactures. The Commons having appointed a day for taking this affair into consideration, carefully examined into the state of the British commerce carried on with Sweden, as well as into the accounts of iron imported from the plantations in America; and a committee of the whole House having resolved, that the duties on American pig and bar-iron

should be removed, a bill[b] was brought in for that purpose, containing a clause, however, to prevent his majesty's subjects from making steel, and establishing mills for slitting and rolling iron within the British colonies of America; this precaution being taken, that the colonists might not interfere with the manufactures of their mother-country.

ERECTION OF THE BRITISH HERRING FISHERY.

The next commercial improvement, of which we shall take notice, was the bill for the encouragement of the British white herring and cod fisheries. This was likewise the result of mature deliberation, importing, that a bounty of thirty shillings per ton should be granted, and paid out of the customs to all new vessels from twenty to four-score tons burthen, which should be built for that purpose, and actually employed in the fishery: that a society should be incorporated, under the name of the Free British Fishery, by a charter, not exclusive, with power to raise a capital not exceeding five hundred thousand pounds; and that three pounds ten shillings per centum per annum should be granted and paid out of the customs to the proprietors for fourteen years, for so much of the capital as should be actually employed in the said fisheries. Corresponding chambers were proposed to be erected in remote parts of North Britain, for taking in subscriptions, and prosecuting the trade, under the directions of the company at London; and the nation in general seemed eager to dispute this branch of commerce with the subjects of Holland, whom they considered as ungrateful interlopers. In the House of Peers, however, the bill met with a formidable opposition from the Earl of Win-

[b] See note [B], vol. vi.

chelsea and Lord Sandys, who justly observed, that it was a crude, indigested scheme, which, in the execution, would never answer the expectations of the people: that in contending with the Dutch, who are the patterns of unwearied industry, and the most rigid economy, nothing could be more absurd than a joint-stock company, which is always clogged with extraordinary expense; and the resolution of fitting out vessels at the port of London, where all sorts of materials, labour, and seamen are so much dearer than in any other part of the united kingdom, exclusive of the great distance and dangerous voyage between the metropolis and the Sound of Brassa in Shetland, the rendezvous at which all the herring-busses were to assemble in the beginning of the fishing season. They likewise took notice of the heavy duty on salt, used in curing the fish for sale, and the beef for provision to the mariners; a circumstance of itself sufficient to discourage adventurers from embarking in a commerce which, at best, yields but very slender profits to the trade in particular, how important soever it might prove to the community in general. These objections were answered by the Duke of Argyle and the Earl of Granville, who seemed to think that this branch of trade could not be fairly set on foot, without such a considerable sum of money as no single individual would care to advance; that a joint-stock company would be able to prosecute the fishery at a smaller expense than that which particular traders must necessarily incur; that the present spirit of the nation, which was eagerly bent upon trying the experiment, ought not to be balked by delay, lest it should evaporate; and that though the plan was not unexceptionable, the defects of it might in the sequel be remedied by the legislature. In a word, the bill was adopted by the majority, with a small amendment in the title, which produced some disquiets in the Lower House; but this dispute was compromised, and it was enacted into a law

towards the close of the session. Nothing could be more agreeable to the public than the sanction of the legislature to this favourite plan, which was ardently promoted, and patronised by men of the greatest eminence for wealth and popularity. The company chose for their governor the Prince of Wales, who received this proof of their attachment and respect with particular marks of satisfaction: the president and vice-president were both aldermen of London; and the council was composed of thirty gentlemen, the majority of whom were members of Parliament. Great pains were taken, and some artifice was used, to learn the Dutch method of curing the fish. People crowded with their subscriptions; a number of hands were employed in building and equipping the busses or vessels used in the fishery; and the most favourable consequences were expected from the general vigour and alacrity which animated these preparations. But the success did not gratify the sanguine hopes of the projectors and adventurers. The objections made in the House of Lords soon appeared to have been well founded: these co-operating with mismanagement in the directors, the spirit of the company began to flag, the natural consequences of commercial disappointment, and now the British fishery seems to languish under the neglect of the legislature.

NEW AFRICAN COMPANY.

Touching the trade to the coast of Africa, petitions were renewed by the company and its creditors, the merchants of Bristol, Liverpool, and Lancaster; and a remonstrance was presented by the planters and merchants interested in the British sugar settlements in America: but the Commons adhered to their former resolutions of laying open the trade, maintaining the forts at the public expense, and regulating the com-

merce by a committee of merchants, representing the chief trading towns in the kingdom, to be superintended by the board of trade and plantations. The bill was accordingly framed and presented, and having proceeded through both Houses without opposition, obtained the royal assent. Over and above these wise, salutary, and patriotic measures for the improvement of commerce, they encouraged the importation of raw silk by an act, reducing the duties formerly payable on that which was the growth of China to the same that is raised on the raw silk from Italy, and allowing the same drawback upon the exportation of the one which had been usually granted on the other. A second bill was brought in for the encouragement of the growth and culture of silk in Carolina and Georgia, where it had been lately produced with extraordinary success, by freeing from all duties that which should be imported from his majesty's dominions in America; and a third was framed, permitting raw silk of the growth or produce of Persia, purchased in Russia, to be imported into Great Britain, from any port or place belonging to the empire of Russia. Divers efforts were made, by different members in the opposition, to rectify certain abuses in the army and administration: some bills were brought in, and several petitions were left on the table; but all of them proved abortive, from the power and influence of the minister, who seemed resolved that no benefit should flow upon the nation through any channel but his own. Nevertheless it must be acknowledged, for the honour of his memory, that there is no session on record so productive as this was of measures advantageous to the community.

WESTMINSTER ELECTION.

The people, however, were not entirely satisfied with the conduct of the administration, if we may judge from

the ferment and commotions raised during the progress of an election for a citizen to represent the city of Westminster in Parliament. The seat which had been filled by Lord Trentham, eldest son of Earl Gower, having become vacant, in consequence of that nobleman's accepting a place at the board of Admiralty, he again declared himself a candidate, and met with a violent opposition. Those who styled themselves the independent electors of Westminster being now incensed to an uncommon degree of turbulence by the interposition of ministerial influence, determined to use their utmost endeavours to baffle the designs of the court, and at the same time take vengeance on the family of Earl Gower, who had entirely abandoned the opposition, of which he was formerly one of the most respected leaders. With this view they held consultations, agreed to resolutions, and set up a private gentleman, named Sir George Vandeput, as the competitor of Lord Trentham, declaring that they would support his pretensions at their own expense, being the more encouraged to this enterprise by the countenance and assistance of the Prince of Wales and his adherents. They accordingly opened houses of entertainment for their partisans, solicited votes, circulated remonstrances, and propagated abuse: in a word, they canvassed, with surprising spirit and perseverance, against the whole interest of St. James's. Mobs were hired, and processions made on both sides, and the city of Westminster was filled with tumult and uproar. The mutual animosity of the parties seemed every day to increase during the election, and a great number of unqualified votes were presented on both sides: all the powers of insinuation, obloquy, and ridicule, were employed to vilify and depreciate both candidates. At length, the poll being closed, a majority of votes appeared in behalf of Lord Trentham; but a scrutiny being demanded by the other side, the returning officer complied with their request.

The speaker of the Lower House had issued his warrant for a new writ of election about the middle of November; and towards the end of February Mr. Fox, secretary at war, standing up, and observing that no return had yet been made, thought proper to move, that the clerk of the crown, the messenger extraordinary attending the great seal, the under-sheriff of Middlesex, and the high-bailiff of Westminster, should attend next morning, and give an account of their issuing, delivering, and executing the writ of election. These being examined, and the high-bailiff declaring that he would proceed with all possible despatch in the scrutiny, which had been demanded and was begun, Mr. Speaker explained to him some particulars of his duty; in the discharge of which, he was given to understand he might depend upon the protection of the House, should he meet with any obstruction which he could not otherwise surmount. By the violence and caprice with which a great number of votes were contested on both sides, the scrutiny was protracted a long time, and the return attended with some extraordinary consequences, which shall be particularized among the transactions of the next year. In the mean time, the present session of Parliament was closed on the twelfth day of April, with a speech from the throne, commending the Commons for having seized the very first opportunity of reducing the interest of the national debt, without the least infringement upon the faith of Parliament; and congratulating them on the flourishing state of the public credit, which could not fail to add strength and reputation to the government, both at home and abroad. Immediately after the rising of the Parliament, his majesty appointed a regency to govern the kingdom in his absence, and embarked for the Continent, in order to visit his German dominions.

EARTHQUAKES IN LONDON.

The month of January and the beginning of February were distinguished, the first day, by a very remarkable aurora borealis, appearing at night to the north-east, of a deep and dusky red colour, like the reflection of some great fire, for which it was by many people mistaken; and the coruscations, unlike those that are generally observed, did not meet in the zenith, but in a point some degrees to the southward. February was ushered in by terrible peals of thunder, flashes of lightning, and such a tempest of wind, hail, and rain, as overwhelmed with fear and consternation the inhabitants of Bristol, where it chiefly raged. On the eighth day of the same month, between twelve and one in the afternoon, the people of London were still more dreadfully alarmed by the shock of an earthquake, which shook all the houses with such violence, that the furniture rocked on the floors, the pewter and porcelain rattled on the shelves, the chamber-bells rang, and the whole of this commotion was attended with a clap or noise resembling that produced by the fall of some heavy piece of furniture. The shock extended through the cities of London and Westminster, and was felt on both sides the river Thames, from Greenwich to the westward of London; but not perceptible at a considerable distance. On the very same day of the next month, between five and six o'clock in the morning, the inhabitants of the metropolis were again affrighted by a second shock, more violent than the first, and abundantly more alarming, as it waked the greater part of the people from their repose. It was preceded by a succession of thick low flashes of lightning, and a rumbling noise, like that of a heavy carriage rolling over a hollow pavement. The shock itself consisted of repeated vibrations, which lasted some seconds, and

violently shook every house from top to bottom. Again the chairs rocked, the shelves clattered, the small bells rang, and in some places public clocks were heard to strike. Many persons, roused by this terrible visitation, started naked from their beds, and ran to their doors and windows in distraction: yet no life was lost, and no house overthrown by this concussion, though it was so dreadful as to threaten an immediate dissolution of the globe. The circumstance, however, did not fail to make a deep impression upon ignorant, weak, and superstitious minds, which were the more affected by the consideration that the two shocks were periodical; that the second, which happened exactly one month after the first, had been the more violent; and that the next, increasing in proportion, might be attended with the most dismal consequences. This general notion was confirmed, and indeed propagated, among all ranks of people, by the admonitions of a fanatic soldier, who publicly preached up repentance, and boldly prophesied that the next shock would happen on the same day in April, and totally destroy the cities of London and Westminster. Considering the infectious nature of fear and superstition, and the emphatic manner in which the imagination had been prepared and prepossessed, it was no wonder that the prediction of this illiterate enthusiast should have contributed, in a great measure, to augment the general terror. The churches were crowded with penitent sinners: the sons of riot and profligacy were overawed into sobriety and decorum. The streets no longer resounded with execrations, or the noise of brutal licentiousness; and the hand of charity was liberally opened. Those, whom fortune had enabled to retire from the devoted city, fled to the country with hurry and precipitation, insomuch that the highways were encumbered with horses and carriages. Many who had, in the beginning, combated these groundless fears with the weapons of reason and

ridicule, began insensibly to imbibe the contagion, and felt their hearts fail, in proportion as the hour of probation approached: even science and philosophy were not proof against the unaccountable effects of this communication. In after ages it will hardly be believed that, on the evening of the eighth day of April, the open fields that skirted the metropolis were filled with an incredible number of people assembled in chairs, in chaises, and coaches, as well as on foot, who waited in the most fearful suspense until morning, and the return of day disproved the truth of the dreaded prophecy. Then their fears vanished: they returned to their respective habitations in a transport of joy; and were soon reconciled to their abandoned vices, which they seemed to resume with redoubled affection, and once more bade defiance to the vengeance of heaven.

PESTILENTIAL FEVER AT THE SESSION IN THE OLD BAILEY.

By this time all the gaols in England were filled with the refuse of the army and navy, which, having been dismissed at the peace, and either averse to labour, or excluded from employment, had naturally preyed upon the commonwealth. Great numbers of those wretches who, by proper regulations, might have been rendered serviceable to the community, were executed as examples; and the rest perished miserably, amidst the stench and horrors of noisome dungeons. Even the prison of Newgate was rendered so infectious by the uncommon crowds of confined felons, stowed together in close apartments, that the very air they breathed acquired a pestilential degree of putrefaction. It was this putrified air which, adhering to the clothes of the malefactors brought to trial at the bar of the Old Bailey in May, produced among the audience a pestilential fever, which infected and proved fatal to the lord mayor

of London, to one alderman, two of the judges, divers lawyers who attended the session, the greatest part of the jury, and a considerable number of the spectators. In order to prevent such disasters for the future, the gaols were cleansed, and accommodated with ventilators, which exhaust the foul and supply a circulation of fresh air; and other humane precautions were taken for the benefit of the prisoners.

DISPUTES BETWEEN RUSSIA AND SWEDEN.

The affairs of the Continent underwent no remarkable alteration. An ambassador extraordinary being sent to Petersburgh from the court of London declared to the czarina's minister, that in case of a rupture between Russia and Sweden, occasioned by the hostilities committed by the former power, his Britannic majesty would consider Russia as the aggressor, and the czarina could not expect that he would supply her with the succours which he was engaged by treaty to furnish for her defence, in case she should be attacked. A declaration of the same nature was made by the ambassador of her imperial majesty the Queen of Hungary, while the ministers of France and Prussia, who were in strict alliance with Sweden, gave her to understand, that they would punctually fulfil their engagements with the court of Stockholm, should she actually invade the Swedish territories of Finland. The spirit with which the King of Prussia exerted himself on this occasion gave infinite umbrage to the czarina, who, indeed, expressed her resentment, by treating the minister of Brandenburgh with contemptuous neglect, and even refused to favour him with an audience, till he should be vested with the character of ambassador. Thus were sown the seeds of misunderstanding between those two powers, which, in the sequel, grew up to the most bitter animosity, and served to inflame those dissensions which have desolated

the fairest provinces of Germany. The remonstrance of his Prussian majesty with respect to the troubles of the north was couched in such terms as gave dissatisfaction to the court of Petersburgh. The Russian minister retired from Berlin, without the ceremony of taking leave, and the Prussian ambassador Warendorf was recalled from the court of the czarina.

PLAN FOR ELECTING THE ARCH-DUKE JOSEPH KING OF THE ROMANS.

The attention of his Britannic majesty was not wholly engrossed by the disputes between Russia and Sweden. He had another object in view, which more nearly concerned the interest of his German dominions; and had set on foot two negotiations of the utmost importance to the commerce and advantage of Great Britain. His first and principal aim was, in conjunction with the court of Vienna, to take such measures as would secure the succession of the imperial dignity to the Archduke Joseph, eldest son and heir to the reigning emperor. As the previous step to that elevation, it was proposed to elect this young prince king of the Romans; and for this purpose it was necessary to procure a majority not only of the electors, but also in the diet of the empire, through which the proposal must have passed. No stone was left unturned to reconcile this expedient to the German princes. Subsidies were offered by the maritime powers of England, and the States-General, to the electors of Mentz and Cologn; and a treaty of the same nature was concluded with the Elector of Bavaria, who, in consideration of an annual subsidy, amounting to forty thousand pounds sterling, two-thirds to be paid by Great Britain, and the rest by the States-General, engaged to keep in readiness a body of six thousand infantry, as auxiliaries to the maritime powers, though not to act against the emperor or empire; and to join

the interest of his Britannic majesty in the diet, as well as in the electoral college. In order to render the King of Poland, Elector of Saxony, propitious to this design, he was accommodated with the loan of a very considerable sum upon the mortgage of certain bailiwicks and lordships belonging to the Saxon dominions. Thus a majority of the electors was secured, and such foundations were laid for the success of this project, that it was generally believed it would be accomplished in his Britannic majesty's next visit to his German dominions. Hopes, it was said, were given to the King of Sweden, that his concurrence would be gratified by erecting the house of Hesse-Cassel, of which he was head, into a tenth electorate. Arguments of an interesting nature were used with the King of Prussia and the Elector Palatine, that, if possible, the diet might unanimously approve of this measure, so necessary for establishing the peace of the empire, and preventing such troubles as arose from a disputed succession at the death of Charles the sixth. These endeavours, however, did not succeed in their full extent.

The King of Prussia, as Elector of Brandenburgh, opposed the election as unnecessary and improper, on account of the health and vigour of the reigning emperor, and the tender years of the archduke. This monarch had set himself up as a balance to the power of the house of Austria, which had long aspired to absolute dominion over its co-estates, and endeavoured to establish an hereditary right of succession to the empire; he, therefore, employed all his influence to frustrate the measure proposed, either actuated by a spirit of pure patriotism, or inspired with designs which he had not yet thought proper to declare. The opposition was joined by the Elector Palatine, and countenanced by the French king, who protested that, for the sake of peace, he would not oppose this election, though contrary to the Golden Bull, provided it should

be confirmed by the unanimous consent of the electoral college; but should any one member signify his dissent, and he or any state of the empire claim the protection and assistance of his most christian majesty, he could not dispense with granting both, in consequence of his being guarantee of the treaty of Westphalia; an engagement by which he was obliged to succour those princes and states of the empire who might have recourse to him, in case of any grievance they suffered contrary to what was stipulated in that constitution. This declaration co-operating with the known character of his Prussian majesty, whose great army overawed Hanover and Bohemia, in all probability damped that vigour with which the courts of Vienna and Herenhausen had hitherto prosecuted this important negotiation.

DISPUTES WITH THE FRENCH ABOUT THE LIMITS OF NOVA SCOTIA.

The second object that employed the attention of the British ministry was the establishment of the precise limits of Acadia or Nova Scotia, where the new colony had suffered great mischief and interruption from the incursions of the Indians, excited to these outrages by the subjects and emissaries of France. Commissaries had been appointed by both crowns to meet at Paris, and compromise these disputes; but the conferences were rendered abortive by every art of cavilling, chicanery, and procrastination, which the French commissioners opposed to the justice and perspicuity of the English claims. They not only misinterpreted treaties, though expressed with the utmost precision, and perplexed the conferences with difficulties and matter foreign to the subject, but they carried the finesse of perfidy so far as to produce false charts and maps of the country, in which the rivers and boundaries were

misplaced and misrepresented. At this time also the insincerity of the French court appeared in affected delays and artful objections, with respect to the evacuation of the neutral islands in the West Indies; and the governors of the British plantations, in different parts of North America, transmitted intelligence, that the French had begun to make encroachments on the banks of the English colonies.

TREATY WITH SPAIN.

Perhaps the precarious footing on which the peace stood between Great Britain and France at this juncture, and the critical situation of affairs in Germany, determined the ministry of England to compromise all differences with Spain, upon such terms as at any other time they would hardly have embraced. In order to discuss those points between the two nations, which had not been settled by the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, conferences were also begun at Madrid, and carried on by Mr. Keene, plenipotentiary to his Britannic majesty, and Don Joseph de Carvajal and Lancastro, the Spanish king's minister. At length a treaty was concluded on these conditions: the King of Spain engaged to pay, in three months, to the South Sea company of England, one hundred thousand pounds sterling, as an indemnification for all claims upon his crown by virtue of the assiento. In other respects, the trade and navigation of the English to the ports of Spain were regulated by former treaties. It was stipulated, that they should pay no other duties than those that were exacted of them in the reign of Charles II. of Spain: that they should be treated on the footing of the most favoured nations; and continue to enjoy the privilege of taking salt at the island of Tortuga. But there was no article restricting the Spanish guarda costas from searching the British vessels on the high seas: although, as we

have already observed, this insolent prerogative, assumed without right, and exercised without humanity, was, in effect, the original and sole cause of the late rupture, which had been attended with such enormous expense to the nation. It must be owned, however, that his catholic majesty was at this period extremely well disposed to live upon good terms with Great Britain. He was resolved to indulge his people with the blessings of peace, to propagate a spirit of industry throughout his dominions, and, in particular, to encourage commerce, which he foresaw would prove a much more certain and inexhaustible source of wealth, power, and influence, than all the treasures he could drain from the mines of Mexico and Peru. His resolutions on this interesting subject were chiefly directed by Don Ricardo Wall, who now acted as his minister at London; a gentleman of Irish extract, who had distinguished himself in the field as well as in the cabinet, and possessed the joint qualifications of a general and a statesman. He had, by virtue of a passport, come over privately to England before the peace, in order to pave the way for the treaty, by a secret negotiation with the English ministers; but immediately after the peace was proclaimed, he appeared in the character of ambassador. He was possessed of the most insinuating address, shrewd, penetrating, and inquisitive. While he resided in London, he spared no pains in learning the nature of those manufactures, and that commerce, by which Great Britain had been so remarkably aggrandized; and on his return to Spain, where in a little time he was placed at the helm of affairs, he turned the knowledge he had thus acquired to the advantage of his country. He not only promoted the useful arts within the kingdom of Spain, but demonstrated the infinite advantage that would accrue from an active trade, which the Spaniards had for many ages neglected; and in a few years their ships were seen to swarm in all the

commercial ports of Europe. Of other foreign events which distinguished this summer, the most remarkable was the death of John, King of Portugal, who perfectly understood, and steadily pursued, the true interest of his country, and in whom many princely qualities were debased by a cruel spirit of bigotry and superstition. He was succeeded by his eldest son Joseph, who, if he has fallen short of his father in some respects, cannot be justly charged with having inherited this paternal weakness.

SESSION OPENED.

The King of Great Britain having returned to England, opened the session of Parliament in January with a speech, importing, that he had concluded a treaty with the King of Spain, and amicably adjusted such differences as could not be so properly compromised in a general treaty: that the commerce of this nation with that country was re-established upon the most advantageous and sure foundations; and that there was the greatest reason to hope the ancient friendship between Great Britain and Spain would, from mutual inclination as well as interest, be now effectually restored. He told them that, in conjunction with the empress-queen and the States-General, he had concluded a treaty with the Elector of Bavaria; and was employed in taking such further measures as might best tend to strengthen and secure the tranquillity of the empire, support its system, and timely anticipate such events as had been found by experience to endanger the common cause, involve Europe in the calamities of war, and occasion the loss of much blood and treasure to these kingdoms. He promised, that both these treaties should be subjected to their perusal; he gave them to understand, that he had received from all the other contracting powers in the definitive treaty of Aix-la-

Chapelle the most full and clear declarations of their resolution to preserve the general peace; and that he had taken care to consolidate the ties of union and friendship between him and his allies, the better to secure their mutual interests, maintain the peace already subsisting, and prevent the occasion of any future rupture. Finally, he recommended unanimity, the improvement of commerce, and the effectual suppression of such outrages and violences as are inconsistent with good order and government, and endanger the lives and properties of the subject, whose happiness and flourishing condition he had entirely at heart.

When the motion was made for an address of thanks, couched in terms that savoured of the most implicit complaisance, approbation, and acquiescence in the measures which the crown had taken, the Earl of Eg—t, and some other anti-courtiers, affirmed, that such an address would be equally servile and absurd. They observed, that nothing could be more preposterous than a blind approbation of measures which they did not know: that nothing could be more ridiculous than their congratulations on the present happy tranquillity, when almost every day's newspapers informed them of some British ships being seized by the Spaniards, or some new attack made by the French on our infant colony in Nova Scotia. With respect to the Continent of Europe, they affirmed, that the tranquillity of Germany would have been upon a much more solid foundation, had England never interposed in the affairs of the empire: in that case the princes would of themselves have supported the constitution of their own country: that the election of an infant for the king of the Romans was much more likely to disturb than establish the tranquillity of Europe; because it would help to overturn the constitution of the empire, by rendering the imperial dignity hereditary in one house, instead of being the result of a free election. They took notice,

that the constitution had provided vicars to govern the empire during the vacancy of the imperial throne; but had made no provision of regents, protectors, or guardians for a minor emperor, because it was never supposed that a minor would be chosen. They inveighed against the late treaty with Spain; in which, they said, the ministry, for the paltry sum of one hundred thousand pounds, had given up the claims of the South Sea company, and other British merchants, who had suffered from depredations to the amount of one million three hundred thousand pounds; and bartered away the freedom of our trade and navigation, by leaving untouched that prerogative which the Spaniards have assumed of searching the British ships in the open seas, and confiscating them should they find on board the least particle of what they called contraband merchandise. They produced an instance of an English ship, lately driven by stress of weather into one of the ports of the Spanish West Indies, where she was searched, seized, and condemned, under this pretence. They recapitulated the conduct of the French, who, in the midst of their declarations of peace and moderation, were still employed in fortifying their settlements on the neutral islands, as well as in harassing and encroaching upon our plantations in North America. They exclaimed against the treaty of subsidy with the Elector of Bavaria, or any other prince in time of peace; observing, that for some years the nation had paid such pensions to the Danes and the Hessians; but, in the course of the late war, the former abandoned our interests, and the latter actually took arms against Great Britain. They affirmed, that the subsidy was greater than the nation could spare; for, unless the land-tax should be continued at four shillings in the pound, they could not afford a shilling to any prince in Germany, without encroaching upon the sinking-fund. "At such a juncture (said a certain member) will any gentleman

presume to propose the continuation of such an imposition on the landholder, for the sake of bribing the princes of Germany to do what?—to preserve the freedom and independency of their native country. I say, princes of Germany, because this subsidy to Bavaria will signify nothing unless we take half a score more of them into our pay; and when we have thus indulged them for seven years of peace, they may give us the slip, as others have done, whenever another war should be declared." Against these objections the motion was supported by William Pitt, at this time an advocate for the ministry. He observed, that the address was no more than the usual compliment to the throne, which did not imply an obligation on the Parliament to approve of measures which they might find cause to censure upon further inquiry. He said, the trivial disputes still subsisting between this nation and the Spaniards, or France, would soon be terminated amicably, and could never affect the general tranquillity of Europe, which was to be established upon a firm alliance between his majesty and such a confederacy upon the Continent as would be an overmatch for the house of Bourbon. He expatiated upon his majesty's wisdom in taking off from the French interest such a powerful prince as the Elector of Bavaria, and concerting other salutary measures for preserving the balance of power on the Continent. He defended the articles of the late treaty with Spain; observing, that what remained of the assiento contract was a matter of very little consequence to the South Sea company; that the demands of this company, and other British merchants, were all cancelled by the rupture with Spain, and more than recompensed to the nation by a great balance of captures during the war, as well as by the great traffic carried on with the Spanish settlements in the West Indies, after it had been laid open by the demolition of their fortresses. He asserted, that by this treaty the court

of Spain had made many important concessions: they had condescended to pay a great sum to the South Sea company; they had consented to the re-establishment of the British trade in Spain, upon a very advantageous and solid footing, by agreeing that the subjects of Great Britain should pay no other duties on merchandise than those exacted of his catholic majesty's own subjects, and to abolish all innovations that had been introduced into the commerce. He affirmed, that the article of No Search was a stipulation which it would have been ridiculous to insist upon; and thought proper to obviate a reproach which he foresaw the opposition would throw upon him, from the circumstance of his having, upon a former occasion, heartily concurred in a motion for an address, that no treaty of peace with Spain should be admitted, unless such a stipulation should be first obtained as a preliminary. He owned he had strenuously contended for such a motion, because at that time, being very young and sanguine, he thought it right and reasonable; but he was now ten years older, had considered matters more coolly, and was convinced that the privilege of No Search, with respect to British vessels sailing near the American shore, would never be obtained, unless Spain should be brought so low as to acquiesce in any terms we, as victors, might propose. He likewise signified his conviction, that all addresses from the House of Commons, during the course of a war, for prescribing terms of peace, were in themselves ridiculous; and that every such address was an encroachment on the king's prerogative, which had always been attended with unlucky consequences. How far these arguments are satisfactory, conclusive, and consistent, we shall leave to the reader's determination. Certain it is, they were adopted by the majority, and the address was presented without further opposition.

The two grand committees appointed to discuss the supplies for the ensuing year, and the funds upon which

they were to be raised, proceeded, as usual, under the direction of the ministry; yet not without some vehement opposition, in which certain servants of the crown expressed the most hearty concurrence. When a motion was made for reducing the number of seamen to eight thousand, Mr. W. Pitt, Mr. Lyttelton, and Mr. G. Grenville, opposed it with all their might of argument and elocution; but they were over-ruled. Annual debates were also revived, with the same success, upon the number of troops constituting the standing army; but the other resolutions of the grand committees met with little or no opposition. The number of seamen for the ensuing year was limited to eight thousand; and that of the standing forces continued at eighteen thousand eight hundred and fifty-seven effective men, including one thousand eight hundred and fifteen invalids. The Commons granted a considerable sum of money for paying off the principal of such redeemable stocks as had not been subscribed, in pursuance of two acts passed in the last session for reducing the interest of annuities. Thirty thousand pounds were given for fulfilling the king's engagement with the Elector of Bavaria: large grants were made for supplying deficiencies, and replacing sums borrowed from the sinking-fund. The expense incurred by the new colony in Nova Scotia, not provided for by Parliament, exceeded fifty-seven thousand pounds; and the maintenance of it for the ensuing year was fixed at fifty-three thousand nine hundred and twenty-seven pounds, fourteen shillings, and four-pence. An enormous charge! if we consider to how little purpose all this bounty was bestowed. A fund was established under the sanction of Parliament for the relief and maintenance of the widows of sea-officers, by allowing, upon the books of every ship of war in sea-pay, the wages and victuals of one man for every hundred of which the complement shall consist, for such time only as the number of men

employed in the service of the royal navy shall not exceed twenty thousand. This was an additional indulgence, over and above the allowance of one man granted by a former act of Parliament. On the whole, the provisions of this year amounted to five millions one hundred twenty-five thousand twenty-three pounds, eleven shillings, and seven-pence, to be raised by the usual duties: the sum of one million twenty-six thousand four hundred seventy-six pounds, four shillings, and sixpence, advanced by the bank of England, to pay off their own unsubscribed annuities, for which they accepted exchequer-bills at three per cent. interest; by the land-tax at three shillings in the pound; a lottery and annuities, at the rate of three per cent. per ann. to be charged on the sinking-fund, redeemable by Parliament. The annual measure called the mutiny-bill was not passed without dispute and altercation: some alterations were proposed, but not adopted; and the sentences of court-martials still subjected to one revision.

DEATH AND CHARACTER OF THE PRINCE OF WALES.

In the midst of these deliberations the kingdom was alarmed with an event which overwhelmed the people with grief and consternation. His royal highness the Prince of Wales, in consequence of a cold caught in his garden at Kew, was seized with a pleuritic disorder; and, after a short illness, expired on the twentieth day of March, to the unspeakable affliction of his royal consort, and the unfeigned sorrow of all who wished well to their country. This excellent prince, who now died in the forty-fifth year of his age, was possessed of every amiable quality which could engage the affection of the people, a tender and obliging husband, a fond parent, a kind master, liberal, generous, candid, and humane;

a munificent patron of the arts, an unwearied friend to merit; well disposed to assert the rights of mankind in general, and warmly attached to the interest of Great Britain. The nation could not but be afflicted at seeing a prince of such expectations ravished from their hopes; and their grief was the better founded, as the king had already attained to an advanced age, and the heir-apparent, George, now Prince of Wales, was a minor.

SETTLEMENT OF A REGENCY IN CASE OF A MINOR SOVEREIGN.

His majesty, foreseeing all the inconveniences which might arise from a minority, deliberated with his council on this subject, and resolved to obtain a parliamentary sanction for the measures judged necessary to secure the succession. With this view he sent a message to both Houses on the twenty-sixth day of April, importing, that nothing could conduce so much to the preservation of the protestant succession in his royal family as proper provisions for the tuition of the person of his successor, and for the regular administration of the government, in case the successor should be of tender years: his majesty, therefore, earnestly recommended this weighty affair to the deliberation of Parliament; and proposed, that when the imperial crown of these realms should descend to any of the late prince's sons, being under the age of eighteen years, his mother, the Princess Dowager of Wales, should be guardian of his person, and regent of these kingdoms, until he should attain the age of majority, with such powers and limitations as should appear necessary and expedient for these purposes. This message produced a very affectionate address, promising to take the affair into their serious consideration; and in the beginning of May the Duke of Newcastle presented to the House

of Peers a bill to provide for the administration of government, in case the crown should descend to a minor. The bill was read a second time, and committed, when a second message arrived from his majesty, recommending to their consideration the settlement of such a council of regency as the bill proposed, consisting of his royal highness the Duke of Cumberland, who at that time commanded the army, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Lord Chancellor, the Lord High Treasurer, or first Lord Commissioner of the Treasury, the President of the Council, the Lord Privy-Seal, the Lord High Admiral of Great Britain, or first Commissioner of the Admiralty, the two principal Secretaries of State, and the Lord Chief Justice of the King's Bench; all these great officers, except his royal highness the duke, for the time being. This bill did not pass through the Lower House without violent debate and bitter sarcasms. The council of regency, though espoused by all the ministry, including the paymaster-general, met with fierce opposition, as an unnecessary and fatal restriction, that would impede the machine of government, and, as the council was constituted, might be productive of the most pernicious consequence. Some of the members ventured even to insinuate the danger of leaving at the head of a large standing army a prince of the blood vested with a share of the regency, possessed of great personal influence, the darling of the soldiery, brave, popular, and enterprising; supposed not wholly devoid of ambition, and not at all remarkable for any symptoms of extraordinary affection towards the person of the heir-apparent. The history of England was ransacked for invidious instances of royal uncles and regents, who had injured the sovereigns, and distressed the government, by their pride, cruelty, and ambition. The characters of John Lackland, and John of Gaunt, Humphrey and Richard Dukes of Gloucester, were called in review, canvassed, compared, and quoted,

with some odious applications; but the majority, being convinced of the loyalty, virtue, integrity, and great abilities of his royal highness, to whom the nation owed obligations of the most important nature, passed the bill with a few amendments, in which the Lords acquiesced; and in a little time it received the royal sanction.

GENERAL NATURALIZATION BILL.

The death of the Prince of Wales was fatal to a bill which had been brought into the House of Commons, for naturalizing all foreign Protestants who should settle within the dominions of Great Britain. Political arithmeticians have generally taken it for granted, that to every commercial nation an increase of people is an increase of opulence; and this maxim is certainly true, on the supposition that every individual is industrious, and that there is a sufficient field for employment; but all these general maxims ought to be received under certain qualifications. When all branches of manufacture are overstocked, an addition of workmen will doubtless be an additional encumbrance on the community. In the debates which this bill produced, the members of the ministry were divided among themselves. The measure was enforced by the chancellor of the exchequer, Mr. W. Pitt, and Mr. Lyttelton; and in opposing it the Earl of Egmont was joined by Mr. Fox, secretary at war. Petitions and counter-petitions were presented by the merchants of London, Bristol, and other trading towns of the kingdom. All merchants and traders of foreign extraction exerted themselves vigorously in its behalf, and it was without doubt countenanced by the administration; but the project was odious to the people in general. The lord-mayor, aldermen, and commons of London, in common council assembled, composed a remonstrance to the

Lower House, setting forth the danger and inutility of a general naturalization of foreign Protestants. A petition of the merchants and principal inhabitants of Bristol represented that such a law would be prejudicial to the trade and commerce of this kingdom, by preventing many industrious artificers from procuring a sufficient support for themselves and their families, and of consequence increasing the rates of the poor: that the introduction of such a number of foreigners, instead of being a support to the present happy establishment, might endanger the very basis of our constitution: that it would greatly tend to the diminution of our manufactures, as many strangers would doubtless come and reside in England for a time, in order to learn the methods and management of our manufacturers and artificers; and, after having obtained this instruction, return to their native countries, where they would establish and carry on works of the same nature. The twentieth day of March being appointed for the third reading of the bill, it was postponed, in consequence of the unfortunate death of the Prince of Wales; and other petitions from different cities of the kingdom being mustered against it in the sequel, the ministry did not think proper to persist in any unpopular measure at such a delicate conjuncture; so the bill was no more brought upon the carpet. Divers other regulations, relating to civil policy as well as to the commerce of Great Britain, were propounded in the House of Commons; but these proposals proved abortive, either because they appeared crude and indigested in themselves, or the House could not obtain proper information touching the allegations they contained.

CENSURE PASSED UPON A PAPER ENTITLED CONSTITUTIONAL QUERIES.

There were no other transactions in this session, except the concurrence of both Houses in stigmatizing a printed paper, entitled "Constitutional Queries, earnestly recommended to the serious Consideration of every true Briton;" and the steps taken by the Commons, in consequence of the commotions occasioned by the Westminster election. The above-mentioned paper, which had been conveyed by letter to the majority of both Houses, was communicated to the Lords in the month of January by the Duke of Marlborough, who moved for resolutions against it as a seditious libel, and that the concurrence of the Commons might be desired. A conference accordingly ensued, and both Houses concurred in voting the paper a false, malicious, scandalous, infamous, and seditious libel, containing the most false, audacious, and abominable calumnies and indignities upon his majesty, and the most presumptuous and wicked insinuations that our laws, liberties, and properties, and the excellent constitution of this kingdom, were in danger under his majesty's legal, mild, and gracious government, with intent to instil groundless suspicions and jealousies into the minds of his majesty's good subjects, and to alienate their affections from his majesty and the royal family. It was therefore resolved by the Lords spiritual and temporal and Commons in Parliament assembled, that in abhorrence and detestation of such abominable and seditious practices, the paper should be burnt by the hands of the common hangman in the new Palace-yard of Westminster; and this sentence was executed accordingly. Then they presented an address to his majesty, desiring that the most effectual means might be taken for discovering the author, printer, or publisher, that

he or they might be brought to condign punishment. Directions were given for this purpose; but without effect. Those concerned in writing, printing, and circulating the paper had acted with such caution that not one of them was ever discovered.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE COMMONS ON THE WESTMINSTER ELECTION.

The proceedings of the Commons with respect to the election of a burgess for Westminster were attended with some extraordinary circumstances, which we shall now record for the edification of those who pique themselves on the privileges of a British subject. We have already observed that a majority appearing on the poll for Lord Trentham, the adherents of the other candidate, Sir George Vandeput, demanded a scrutiny, which was granted by the high-bailiff of Westminster, the returning officer. During this tedious investigation, which rolled chiefly on the qualifications of voters, he acted with such address and seeming candour as gave entire satisfaction to both parties, till at length he determined in favour of Lord Trentham, whom he returned as duly elected. Those who styled themselves the independent electors did not acquiesce in this determination without clamour, reproach, menaces, and riot. They taxed Mr. Leigh, the high-bailiff, with partiality and injustice: they loudly affirmed, that ministerial influence had been used in the most scandalous manner; and, finally, joined Sir George Vandeput in a petition to the Lower House, complaining of an undue election and return of a member for the city of Westminster. The Commons, instead of inquiring into the merits of these petitions, ordered them to lie upon the table; and without any complaint from any person whatever, a motion was made that Leigh, the high-bailiff, should attend the House immediately, in order to make them acquainted

with what he had done in pursuance of the directions he had formerly received from that House, touching the execution of the writ for electing a new member to represent the city of Westminster. As this motion had been preconcerted, Leigh was attending in the lobby, and immediately called into the House to be examined on this subject. Having, in the course of his examination, alleged that the election had been protracted by affected delays, he was asked by whom, and by what means; but before he could answer, the Earl of Egmont, interposing, objected to the question as improper, and moved for the order of the day. A debate immediately ensued, in which the impropriety of the question was demonstrated by Mr. Henley, now lord-keeper, Dr. Lee, and some others, the most sensible and moderate members of the House; but they were opposed with great violence by Lord Viscount Corke, Henry Fox, Esq., Sir William Young, Colonel Lyttelton, and the weight of the ministry; so that the motion for the order of the day was carried in the negative, and the high-bailiff required to answer the question. Thus interrogated, he declared that he had been impeded in the scrutiny, and mal-treated, by Mr. Crowle, who had acted as counsel for Sir George Vandeput, by the Honourable Alexander Murray, brother to Lord Elibank, and one Gibson, an upholsterer, who had been very active, zealous, and turbulent in his endeavours to promote the interest of Sir George Vandeput, or rather to thwart the pretensions of the other candidate, who was supposed to be countenanced by the ministry. These three persons, thus accused, were brought to the bar of the House, notwithstanding the strenuous remonstrances of several members, who opposed this method of proceeding as a species of oppression equally arbitrary and absurd. They observed, that, as no complaint had been preferred, they had no right to take cognizance of the affair: that if any undue influence had been used, it

would naturally appear when the merits of the election should fall under their inquiry: that a complaint having been lodged already against the returning officer, it was their duty to investigate his conduct, and punish him, if he should be found delinquent; but that nothing could be more flagrantly unjust, and apparently partial, than their neglecting the petitions of the other candidate and electors, and encouraging the high-bailiff, who stood charged with iniquity, to recriminate upon his accusers, that they might be disabled from giving evidence on the inquiry into the merits of the election. What difference is it to the subject, whether he is oppressed by an arbitrary prince, or by the despotic insolence of a ministerial majority? Mr. Crowle alleged, in his own vindication, that he had been employed as counsel by the electors of Westminster, and attended the scrutiny in that character; that after the high-bailiff had, in the course of the last session, received the order of the House to expedite the election, he hurried on the scrutiny with such precipitation as, he apprehended, was unjust, and prejudicial to his clients; that, in this apprehension, he (Mr. Crowle) insisted upon the high-bailiff's proceeding with more deliberation, and in so doing he thought he did his duty to his employers. Some evidence being examined against him, declared he had not only protracted the scrutiny, but also spoke disrespectful words of the House of Commons: he was, therefore, reprimanded on his knees by the speaker, and discharged.

MR. MURRAY SENT PRISONER TO NEWGATE.

Mr. Murray being charged with having uttered some threatening and affronting expressions, the House adjourned the consideration of this affair for some days, at the expiration of which Mr. Murray was to be heard by his counsel; but, in the mean time, they ordered him

to be taken into custody by the serjeant at arms attending the House. This step, however, was not taken without a warm opposition by some of the most sedate and intelligent members of the House, who considered it as a cruel act of oppression. They observed, that in cases of breach of privilege, no person complained of was ever taken into custody until after he had been fully heard in his defence; that this was literally prejudging the cause before it had been examined; and the oppression was the greater, as the alleged offence consisted entirely of words, of which no complaint or information had been made for above eight months after the supposed offence had been committed; and, even then, not till an accusation had been lodged against the informant, upon the trial of which accusation the persons informed against might very probably be the most material witnesses. They observed, that in one of the highest offences which can be committed by words, namely, that of denying the king's right to the crown, or renouncing the Trinity, the information must be brought in three or four days after the words are spoken; the words must be proved to have been spoken maliciously, directly, and advisedly, and the prosecution must commence in three months after the information. These suggestions made no more impression than if they had been uttered in a desert. Those who were secure in their number asserted that the House of Commons was not restricted by the forms of proceedings at common law; and that it was necessary to vindicate their own honour and dignity, by making examples of those who seemed to hold them in contempt. Mr. Murray was committed to the custody of the serjeant at arms, and found bail; and Gibson was sent prisoner to Newgate, from whence he was in a few days released, upon presenting a humble petition, professing his sorrow for having incurred the displeasure of the House, to the bar of which he was brought, and received a reprimand

on his knees from the speaker. In the mean time divers witnesses being examined before the House, declared, that Mr. Murray had been seen, about the time of the return of a member for Westminster, heading and exciting a tumult to acts of violence against the high-bailiff. The majority, therefore, after a long and warm debate, agreed, that for his dangerous and seditious practices, in violation and contempt of the privileges of the House, and of the freedom of elections, he should be committed close prisoner to Newgate. Then, in the close of another violent debate, they resolved, that he should be brought to the bar of the House, to receive that sentence on his knees. He accordingly appeared, and being directed by the speaker to kneel, refused to comply. He knew that he could not be discharged from Newgate during the session, without petitioning, acknowledging his offence, and making such concessions as he thought would imply a consciousness of guilt: he considered this whole transaction as an oppressive exertion of arbitrary power, and, being apprised of the extent of their authority, determined to bear the brunt of their indignation, rather than make submission which he deemed beneath the dignity of his character. When he refused to humble himself, the whole House was in commotion; he was no sooner removed from the bar than they resolved, that his having in a most insolent and audacious manner refused to be on his knees at the bar of that House, in consequence of their former resolution, was a high and most dangerous contempt of the authority and privilege of the Commons: it was therefore ordered, that he should be committed close prisoner to Newgate, debarred the use of pen, ink, and paper; and that no person should have access to him without the leave of the House. Finally, a committee was appointed to consider what methods might be proper to be taken by them, in relation to this instance of contempt. Meanwhile the petitioners against the return

made by the high-bailiff, perceiving the temper of the House, and the complexion of the majority, withdrew their petition; and the order which had passed for hearing the merits of the election was discharged. Mr. Murray being taken dangerously ill in Newgate, application was made to the Commons by some of his relations, that he might be removed to a more convenient situation; and his physician, being examined, gave it as his opinion that he was infected with the gaol distemper. Upon this representation the House agreed that the speaker should issue a warrant for removing him from Newgate to the custody of the serjeant at arms, but this favour he refused to accept, and expressed the warmest resentment against those relations who had applied to the Commons in his behalf. Thus he remained sequestered even from his own brother and sister, under the displeasure of the Commons of England, who condescended so far as to make resolutions touching the physician, apothecary, and nurse who attended this prisoner. But the prorogation of Parliament having put an end to their authority for that session, Mr. Murray was discharged of course, and conducted by the sheriffs from Newgate to his own house, in procession, with flags and streamers exhibiting the emblems of liberty.

SESSION CLOSED. STYLE ALTERED.

In the month of June the session was closed with a speech from the throne, in which his majesty thanked both Houses for the zeal and affection they had manifested towards him and his government; and congratulated the Commons in particular, upon their firmness and prudence in reducing the interest of the national debt, a measure as agreeable to him as essential to the strength and welfare of the kingdom[c].—The interior

[c] See note [C], vol. vi.

economy of Great Britain produced within the circle of this year nothing else worthy of historical regard, except a series of enormous crimes, arising from the profligacy of individuals, which reflected disgrace upon the morals and polity of the nation. Rapine and robbery had domineered without intermission ever since the return of peace, which was attended with a reduction of the army and navy; but now crimes of a deeper die seemed to lift up their heads in contempt of law and humanity[d]. Every day almost produced fresh instances of perjury, forgery, fraud, and circumvention; and the kingdom exhibited a most amazing jumble of virtue and vice, honour and infamy, compassion and obduracy, sentiment and brutality.

[d] See note [D], vol. vi.

CHAPTER XXII.

Death of the Queen of Denmark and Prince of Orange.—Misunderstanding between the Czarina and King of Prussia.—Measures for electing a King of the Romans.—Death of the King of Sweden.—Session opened.—Animosity of the Commons towards Mr. Murray.—Proceedings upon a Pamphlet, entitled the Case of Mr. Murray.—Supplies granted.—Civil Regulations.—Law relating to the forfeited Estates in Scotland.—New Consolidations of Funds.—Two Ports opened for the Importation of Irish Wool.—The King sets out for Hanover.—Affairs of the Continent.—Dispute between Hanover and Prussia, concerning East Friezeland.—Misunderstanding between the Courts of London and Berlin.—Improvement of Pomerania.—Treaty with the Elector Palatine.—Session opened.—Supplies granted.—Game Act.—Act for performing Quarantine.—And for preventing the plundering of shipwrecked Vessels.—Bill relating to the Bounty on Corn exported.—Turkey Trade laid open.—Naturalization of the Jews.—Marriage Act.—Deliberations concerning the Sugar Colonies.—Fate of the Register Bill.—Sir Hans Sloane's Museum purchased by Parliament.—Story of Elizabeth Canning.—Execution of Dr. Cameron.—Tumults in different Parts of the Kingdom.—Disturbances in France.—Proceedings of the Diet relative to East Friezeland.—Treaty between the Court of Vienna and the Duke of Modena.—Conferences with Respect to Nova Scotia broke up.—Description of Nova Scotia.—Disputes concerning its Limits.

DEATH OF THE QUEEN OF DENMARK AND PRINCE OF ORANGE.

The royal family of England had sustained three severe shocks in the compass of a few months. Besides the loss of the Prince of Wales, which the nation lamented as irreparable, his majesty was deeply afflicted by the untimely death of his youngest daughter, the Queen of Denmark, who died at Copenhagen, on the nineteenth day of December, in the prime of youth.

She was one of the most amiable princesses of the age in which she lived, whether we consider the virtues of her heart, or the accomplishments of her person; generous, mild, and tender-hearted; beloved even almost to adoration by her royal consort, to whom she had borne a prince and two princesses; and universally admired and revered by the subjects of his Danish majesty. Her death had been preceded about two months by that of her brother-in-law, the Prince of Orange, no less regretted by the natives of the United Provinces, for his candour, integrity, and hereditary love to his country. Though he had not distinguished himself by the lustre of a superior genius, he had been at great pains to cultivate his understanding, and study the true interest of that community of which he was a member. He had always approved himself a good and zealous citizen, and, since his elevation to the stadtholdership, taken many salutary steps for the advantage of his country. Among other excellent schemes which he suggested, he left a noble plan with the States-General for restoring their commerce to its former lustre, and lived long enough to receive their warmest acknowledgment for this last proof of his prudence and patriotism. His son and daughter being both infants, the administration of the government devolved upon the princess, as governante during her son's minority; and as such she succeeded to all the power which her husband had enjoyed.

MISUNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE CZARINA AND KING OF PRUSSIA.

With respect to the affairs of the Continent, the peace of the North seemed still as precarious as ever; for though the difference between Russia and Sweden had been compromised, the mutual disgust between the czarina and the King of Prussia had gained such ac-

cession from reciprocal insults, ill offices, and inflammatory declarations, that these two powers seemed to be on the eve of a rupture, and each was employed in making extraordinary preparations for war. The courts of Vienna and Great Britain, foreseeing that such a rupture would embroil the empire, and raise insurmountable obstructions to their favourite scheme of electing the Archduke Joseph king of the Romans, resolved to employ all their influence, in order to effect a reconciliation between the courts of Petersburgh and Berlin. His Prussian majesty had signified to the King of Great Britain, and the States-General, the situation in which he stood with the czarina, and solicited their interposition, that the difference might be amicably accommodated. At the same time he sent an envoy extraordinary to Versailles, to negotiate with the French king for a very considerable body of auxiliaries, in case he should be attacked. These circumstances induced the maritime powers, and the court of Vienna, to use their utmost endeavours for the prevention of a rupture; and accordingly they made remonstrances on this subject by their ministers at Petersburgh, proposing that the quarrel should be terminated without bloodshed, and all causes of animosity be buried in oblivion.

MEASURES FOR ELECTING A KING OF THE ROMANS.

In the mean time, they eagerly prosecuted the design of the election; and the imperial minister at Berlin not only communicated to his Prussian majesty the sentiments of the King of England on this expedient, but even solicited his vote for the Archduke Joseph, when the election of a king of the Romans should be proposed in the electoral college. To this proposal he replied, that he was extremely well disposed to manifest his regard for their imperial majesties, and to give

the most genuine proofs of it, even in the proposed election of a king of the Romans, considering the great merit of the present candidate, the Archduke Joseph: but he left it to the consideration of their imperial majesties, whether the election would not be a little premature, if transacted at a time when his imperial majesty was in the flower of his age; enjoying perfect health; and when all Europe, particularly the empire, was hushed in the bosom of tranquillity, so that no circumstance seemed to prognosticate the necessity of such an election; or of putting in execution the motives mentioned in the capitulation of the reigning emperor's election; especially as the examination of these motives belonged to the whole empire, and ought to precede the election, by virtue of the eighth article of the treaty of Westphalia. He observed, that, in case of the emperor's death, Germany would find herself in a very disagreeable situation, under the government of a minor. For these reasons, he said, he could not help advising their imperial majesties to wait until the archduke should be of age, when his election might be carried on more conformably to the laws and constitutions of the empire, and more suitable to the majesty of the whole Germanic body. This reply he circulated among the electors, and in particular transmitted it to the King of Great Britain, desiring they would deliberate maturely on this subject, and confer together in a body, as well as in private, that they might proceed according to the ancient custom of the electoral college, and take such measures as should be judged expedient for the honour and advantage of the community. This circular letter was answered both by the King of England and the Elector of Bavaria, who demonstrated, that it was the privilege of the electoral college only, without any participation of the other princes of the empire, to elect a king of the Romans during the life of the emperor, in order to maintain the peace and preserve the

liberties of Germany; and that the neglect of this wise precaution had produced bloody wars, and many fatal consequences to the empire. They observed, that nothing could more contribute to the establishment of the public tranquillity than this measure, so ardently desired by the majority of the German princes; and that, although the Archduke Joseph wanted a few years of being of age, and it might possibly happen that the reigning emperor should die during that prince's minority, yet it would be much less prejudicial to the empire to have a minor chief, than to see the succession altogether unsettled. His Prussian majesty received a declaration to the same purpose from the Elector of Mentz; and understanding that this prince, as arch-chancellor of the empire, intended to convoke an electoral diet, in order to propose the election of a king of the Romans, he wrote an elaborate letter to his electoral highness, explaining at more length his reasons for postponing the election. He quoted that sentence of the treaty of Westphalia which expressly declares, that the election of a king of the Romans shall be discussed and ordained by the common consent of the states of the empire; and, therefore, he could not conceive what right the electoral college had to arrogate this privilege to themselves, excluding the other states of the empire. He observed, that the imperial capitulations, which were the only laws of the empire that treated of this subject, mentioned only three cases in which it was lawful to proceed to such an election; namely, the emperor's leaving, and long absence from, Germany; his advanced age, or an indisposition, rendering him incapable of managing the reins of government; and any case of emergency in which the preservation of the empire's prosperity is interested. He affirmed, that none of these motives at present existed: that, in case the imperial crown should devolve to a minor, many mischiefs and disorders must ensue, as the constitutions of the

empire have established no regulations nor regency in that event: that an election of this nature, carried on under the power, influence, and authority of the head of the empire, would strike at the fundamental privileges of the princes and states; consequently, in time overturn the constitution of the empire, which, from being an elective dignity, conferred by the free and independent suffrages of the electoral college and states of Germany, under certain capitulations, obliging the prince thus chosen to govern according to law, would become an hereditary succession, perpetuated in one family, which, of course, must be aggrandized to the prejudice of its co-estates and the ruin of the Germanic liberties. In a word, all Germany in general, and Ratisbon in particular, was filled with writings published on both sides: by the emperor and his adherents, to demonstrate that the election of a king of the Romans, during the life of the emperor, had often happened, and at this present time was necessary, and would be advantageous to the empire: while the King of Prussia and his friends laboured to prove that such an election, at the present juncture, would be ill-timed, irregular, and of dangerous consequence. Perhaps, if the truth was known, this enterprising prince had projected some great scheme, with the execution of which this proposed establishment would have interfered. Certain it is, he exerted himself with that spirit and perseverance which were peculiar to his character, to frustrate the intention of the courts of Vienna and London in this particular, and was assisted with all the intrigue of the French ministry. Their joint endeavours were so effectual, that the Elector of Cologn renounced his subsidiary treaty with the maritime powers, and once more threw himself into the arms of France. The Elector Palatine being solicited by the empress-queen and his Britannic majesty to co-operate with their views, insisted, as a preliminary article, upon being indemnified by the

court of Vienna for the ravages committed in his territories by the Austrian troops, during the course of the last war: the King of Poland, Elector of Saxony, made the same demand of the like indemnification, which was granted by the mediation of King George; and then he subscribed to a subsidy-treaty, obliging himself to furnish a body of six thousand auxiliaries, in case they should be required by the maritime powers; and to act as elector, in concert with the house of Austria, in every thing relating to the welfare of his country that should square with the fundamental laws of the empire. The courts of London and Vienna had this election so much at heart, that they sounded almost all the powers of Europe, to know how they stood affected towards the measure proposed. The King of Spain declined intermeddling in a domestic affair of the empire. The French king returned an ambiguous answer; from whence it was concluded, that nothing but opposition could be expected from that quarter. The Swedish monarch was rendered propitious to the project, by assurances that the house of Hesse-Cassel, of which he was the head, should be elevated into an electorate. They even endeavoured to soften his Prussian majesty, by consenting, at last, that the treaty of Dresden, confirming to him the possession of Silesia, should be guaranteed by the diet of the empire; a sanction which he now actually obtained, together with the ratification of his imperial majesty. Notwithstanding this indulgence, he still persisted in raising fresh objections to the favourite project, on pretence of concerting measures for preventing the inconveniences that might result from a minority; for regulating the capitulations to be agreed on with the king of the Romans; securing the freedom of future elections, and preserving the prerogatives and privileges of the Germanic body in all its members. In consequence of these obstacles, joined to the apostacy of the Elector of Cologn, the obstinacy of the Elector

Palatine, and the approaching diet of Hungary, at which their imperial majesties were obliged personally to preside, the measures for the election were suspended till next summer, when his Britannic majesty was expected at Hanover, to put the finishing stroke to this great event in favour of the house of Austria.

DEATH OF THE KING OF SWEDEN.

Another disappointment, with respect to this election, the promoters of it sustained in the death of his Swedish majesty, who expired in a good old age, and was succeeded by Adolphus Frederick, Duke of Holstein Eutin, Bishop of Lubeck, upon whom the succession had been settled for some years, by the unanimous concurrence of the states of the kingdom. This prince ascended the throne of Sweden without the least disturbance; and, of his own accord, took an oath in full senate, that he would never attempt to introduce a despotic authority; but maintain their liberties with his blood, and govern his subjects in all respects according to the laws, and the form of government established in Sweden. This public act, which was communicated to all the foreign ministers, and particularly to the envoy from Petersburgh, met with such a favourable reception from the czarina, that she expressed her satisfaction in a public declaration; and the good understanding between the two courts was perfectly restored.

SESSION OPENED.

When the Parliament of England was opened, in the month of November, the king, in his speech from the throne, gave them to understand, that for the same purposes which suggested the treaty with the Elector of Bavaria, he had now, in conjunction with the States-General, concluded another with the King of Poland,

Elector of Saxony. He told them, that the unfortunate death of the Prince of Orange had made no alteration in the state of affairs in Holland; and that he had received the strongest assurances from the states of their firm resolution to maintain the intimate union and friendship happily subsisting between his majesty and those ancient and natural allies of his crown. He exhorted both Houses to consider seriously of some effectual provisions, to suppress those audacious crimes of robbery and violence, grown so frequent about the capital, proceeding in a great measure from that profligate spirit of irreligion, idleness, gaming, and extravagance, which had of late extended itself in an uncommon degree, to the dishonour of the nation, and the great offence and prejudice of the sober and industrious part of the people. The paragraphs of this speech were, as usual, echoed back to the throne in addresses, replete with expressions of loyalty, affection, and approbation. Opposition was by this time almost extinguished; and the proceedings of both Houses took place with such unanimity as was hardly ever known before this period in a British Parliament. The Commons, however, seem to have assembled with such sentiments as did no great honour to their temper and magnanimity. In a few days after the session opened, Lord Viscount C——e, a young nobleman, whose character entitled him to very little regard or influence among men of sense and probity, made a motion, that Mr. Murray, who had been so severely persecuted in the last session for refusing to humble himself on his knees before them, should be again committed close prisoner to Newgate for the same offence. This proposal, which supposed a power that the Commons had never before exercised, was sharply disputed by the Earl of Egmont, and others, who had not resigned all sense of moderation; but the majority adopted the measure with great eagerness, and the speaker was ordered to issue his warrant ac-

cordingly. Then the House resolved, that the said Alexander Murray should receive the sentence, for his now being committed close prisoner to his majesty's gaol of Newgate, at the bar of the House, upon his knees; and the serjeant at arms was commanded to take him into custody for this purpose. Their indignation, however, was eluded by the caution of the delinquent, who, having foreseen the effects of their resentment, had prudently retired to another country. They determined, nevertheless, to proceed against him as a person of some consequence in the commonwealth; for, being informed of his retreat, they condescended so far as to present an address to his majesty, desiring that his royal proclamation might be issued for apprehending the said Mr. Murray, promising a reward to him who should have the good fortune to apprehend this fugitive—a request with which his majesty most graciously complied.

PROCEEDINGS UPON A PAMPHLET ENTITLED "THE CASE OF MR. MURRAY."

Nor was this the only address presented to the king upon such an important subject. A pamphlet, entitled "The Case of the Hon. Alexander Murray, Esquire, in an Appeal to the People of Great Britain," was first stigmatized in a complaint to the House, and was afterwards produced, and read at the table. The piece was written with great acrimony, and abounded with severe animadversions, not only upon the conduct of the returning officer, but also on the proceedings of the Commons. The violent members immediately took fire, and the flame extended itself to the majority. Nay, the House unanimously resolved, that the pamphlet was an impudent, malicious, scandalous, and seditious libel, falsely and most injuriously reflecting upon and aspersing the proceedings of the House, tending to

create misapprehensions in the minds of the people, to the great dishonour of the said House, and in violation of the privileges thereof. They furthermore presented an address to the king, desiring his majesty would be graciously pleased to give directions to his attorney-general to prosecute the authors or author, the printers or printer, and the publishers or publisher of the said scandalous libel, that they might be brought to condign punishment. Directions were accordingly given for this purpose, and a prosecution commenced against the publisher, who had some reason to be dismayed, considering the great weight of influence he was doomed to encounter—influence arising from a prosecution of the crown, instituted at the request, and founded on a vote, of the House of Commons. Nevertheless, when the cause was heard before the lord chief justice of England, a jury of free-born Englishmen, citizens of London, asserted their privileges of judging the law as well as the fact, and acquitted the defendant with a truly admirable spirit of independency. They considered the pamphlet as an appeal against oppression; and, convinced that the contents were true, they could not in conscience adjudge it a false libel, even though it had been so declared by one of the branches of the legislature.

The Commons, in regulating the supplies of the ensuing year, voted the continuation of eighteen thousand eight hundred and fifty-seven men for the land service, though not without some opposition from certain patriots, who, rather from a sense of duty than from any hope of influencing the majority, affirmed that sixteen thousand men in time of peace would answer all the ends proposed by a standing army. The number of seamen was fixed at ten thousand: large sums were granted to make up deficiencies, and fulfil the engagements of the crown with the Electors of Bavaria and Saxony, as well as for the maintenance of Nova Scotia

and Georgia, and the castles on the coast of Guinea; and one hundred and twelve thousand one hundred and fifty-two pounds, three shillings, and three-pence were voted, as a full compensation to the old royal African company for their exclusive charter and property, to be applied for the relief of their creditors[e].

The laws enacted for the encouragement of traffic, and the regulations of civil polity, consisted in an act for licensing pawnbrokers, and for the more effectual preventing the receiving of stolen goods: another for preventing thefts and robberies, by which places of entertainment, dancing, and music in London, Westminster, and within twenty miles of the capital, were suppressed and prohibited, unless the proprietors of them could obtain licences from the justices of the peace, empowered for that purpose: a third for annexing the forfeited estates in Scotland unalienably in the crown, after having made satisfaction to the lawful creditors; establishing a method of leasing these estates, and applying the rents and profits of them for the better civilizing and improving the Highlands, and preventing future disorders in that part of the united kingdom. Nothing could be more salutary than the purposes of these regulations. The suburbs of the metropolis abounded with an incredible number of public-houses, which continually resounded with the noise of riot and intemperance: they were the haunts of idleness, fraud, and rapine, and the seminaries of drunkenness, debauchery, extravagance, and every vice incident to human nature; yet the suppression of these receptacles

[e] These expenses were defrayed by a continuation of the duties on malt, &c.; a land-tax at three shillings in the pound; a duty on licences, to be yearly paid by pawnbrokers and dealers in second-hand goods, within the bills of mortality; the sum of one million four hundred thousand pounds advanced by the bank, according to a proposal made for that purpose; five hundred thousand pounds to be issued by the sinking-fund; a duty laid on gum senega; and the continuation of divers other occasional impositions. The grants for the year amounted to something less than four millions, and the provisions made for this expense exceeded it in the sum of two hundred seventy-one thousand twenty-four pounds, ten shillings, and sixpence halfpenny.

of infamy was attended with an inconvenience, which, in some cases, arose even to a degree of oppression. The justices, being vested by the legislature with the power of granting or refusing licences, were constituted, in effect, the arbiters on whose decision the fortunes and livelihood of many individuals absolutely depended. Many of those who exercised this species of magistracy within the bills of mortality were, to the reproach of government, men of profligate lives, needy, mean, ignorant, and rapacious, and often acted from the most scandalous principles of selfish avarice.

LAW RELATING TO THE FORFEITED ESTATES IN SCOTLAND.

The law relating to the Highlands of Scotland was well calculated for promoting, among the inhabitants of that country, such a spirit of industry as might detach them from their dangerous connexions, and gradually supersede that military genius which had been so productive of danger and alarm to the southern parts of Great Britain. The king, by this act, was empowered to appoint commissioners for managing the forfeited estates; who were enabled to grant leases of mall farms, not above twenty pounds a year, to individuals, who should take an oath to government to reside upon and cultivate the lands thus let. It was also provided, that no lease should be granted for a longer term than twenty-one years; and that the lessees should not pay above three-fourths of the annual value. Although these forfeited estates were generally encumbered with claims beyond their real value, and the act directed that they should be disposed of by public sale; yet, as they lay in the most disaffected parts of the Highlands, it was thought necessary that they should remain in the possession of the crown, because, in case of their being publicly sold, they might be purchased

in trust for the families of the persons by whom they were forfeited, and thus the spirit of disaffection would still survive. A valuation, therefore, was made by the court of session in Scotland, at the joint suit of the crown and the creditors; and the value being ascertained, the just claimants were paid out of the next aids granted by Parliament. The bill met with considerable opposition in the House of Peers from the Duke of Bedford and the Earl of Bath, who probably foresaw that the good effects of this scheme, so laudable in itself, would be frustrated in the execution; and that the act, instead of answering the purposes for which it was intended, would serve only as a job to gratify the rapacious retainers to the government, and their emissaries, in that country. After a warm debate, however, it was adopted by a great majority, and obtained the royal assent.

NEW CONSOLIDATIONS OF FUNDS.

A third law related to certain articles of the national debt, which was now converted into several joint stocks of annuities, transferable at the bank of England, to be charged on the sinking-fund. A great number of different funds for annuities, established at different times, and by different acts, subsisted at this period, so that it was necessary to keep many different accounts, which could not be regulated without considerable trouble and expense, for the removal of which the bill was calculated.

TWO PORTS OPENED FOR THE IMPORTATION OF IRISH WOOL.

In consequence of petitions from the woollen manufacturers of Westmoreland and Yorkshire, two bills were brought in, and passed through both Houses, by which the ports of Lancaster and Great Yarmouth were

ISLINGTON

opened for the importation of wool and woollen-yarn from Ireland; but why this privilege was not extended to all the frequented ports of the kingdom it is not easy to conceive, without supposing a little national jealousy on one hand, and a great deal of grievous restraint on the other. Over and above these new laws, some unsuccessful endeavours were used in behalf of commerce and police. A bill was offered for laying further restrictions on pawnbrokers and brokers, that they might no longer suck the blood of the poor, and act as the accessaries of theft and robbery, which was canvassed, debated, and made its way through the Lower House; but the Lords rejected it as a crude scheme, which they could not amend, because it was a money bill, not cognizable by their House, without engaging in a dispute with the Commons. Another bill was prepared, for giving power to change the punishment of felony, in certain cases, to confinement and hard labour in dock-yards or garrisons. It was the opinion of many who wished well to their country, and were properly qualified to prosecute such inquiries, that the practice of consigning such a number of wretches to the hands of the executioner served only, by its frequency, to defeat the purpose of the law, in robbing death of all its terror, and the public of many subjects, who might, notwithstanding their delinquency, be in some measure rendered useful to society. Such was the motive that influenced the promoters of this bill; by which it was proposed, in imitation of that economy practised in other countries, to confine felons convicted under certain circumstances to hard labour upon the public works of the kingdom. The scheme was adopted by the Lower House, but rejected by the Lords, who seemed apprehensive of its bringing such discredit upon his majesty's dock-yards, as would discourage persons who valued their reputation from engaging in such employment. Of still greater importance to the nation was

the next measure proposed, in a bill for making the militia of England more useful, presented by Mr. Thornton, a gentleman of Yorkshire, who had distinguished himself by his loyalty and patriotism. It was canvassed in a committee of the whole House, and underwent divers amendments; but miscarried, through the aversion of the ministry to any project tending to remove or lessen the necessity of maintaining a standing army. A considerable number of petitions for different regulations, in respect to commerce and convenience of traffic, were presented, considered, and left upon the table. A remonstrance from the prisoners confined in the gaol of the King's Bench, complaining of their miserable situation, arising from want of room and other conveniences, being taken into consideration by a committee, among other evidences, they examined that remarkable personage who had signalized himself in different parts of Christendom, under the name of Theodore, King of Corsica. Though formerly countenanced and even treated as a sovereign prince by the British ministry, he was now reduced to the forlorn condition of a confined debtor; and, to the reproach of this kingdom, died in prison, surrounded with all the misery of indigence, and overwhelmed with the infirmities of old age. But the most remarkable circumstance of the parliamentary transactions that distinguished this session was a motion made in both Houses for an address to the king, beseeching his majesty, that in time of public tranquillity he would be graciously pleased to avoid entering into subsidiary treaties with foreign princes, which are so burthensome to this nation. This extraordinary proposal was made and strenuously urged by the Duke of B—, and a vehement debate ensued, in which the Earls of G—, S—, and H—, opposed it with an exertion of superior abilities, and the question being put, was carried in the negative without a division. The same fate attended it in the

House of Commons, where it was introduced by Lord H—y, and supported by some distinguished orators. The session ended in the latter end of March, when his majesty, having given his assent to ninety-five public and private bills, harangued both Houses, and prorogued the Parliament[f].

THE KING SETS OUT FOR HANOVER.

Immediately after the prorogation the king appointed a regency, and set out for Hanover, in order to complete the great scheme he had projected for electing a king of the Romans. Great Britain, in the mean time, produced no event of importance, or any transaction that deserves historical mention, except the ratification of two treaties of peace and commerce with the states of Tripoli and Tunis on the coast of Barbary, concluded by the British consuls in those cities, under the influence and auspices of an English squadron, commanded by Commodore Keppel, son to the Earl of Albemarle. The tide of luxury still flowed with an impetuous current, bearing down all the mounds of temperance and decorum; while fraud and profligacy struck out new channels, through which they eluded the restrictions of the law, and all the vigilance of civil policy. New arts of deception were invented, in order to ensnare and ruin the unwary; and some infamous practices in the way of commerce were countenanced by persons of rank and importance in the commonwealth. A certain member of Parliament was obliged to withdraw himself from his country, in consequence of a discovery, by which it appeared that he had con-

[f] Among the proceedings of this session, it may not be improper to mention a new act for the prevention of murders, which had been shockingly frequent of late, importing, that every criminal convicted of this horrid crime should be executed in one day after his sentence, and his body delivered to the surgeons for dissection—an expedient which had been found productive of very salutary consequences.

trived and executed schemes for destroying his own ships at sea, with a view to defraud the insurers.

In the course of this year the affairs of the Continent did not undergo any material alteration. In France, the religious dispute concerning the doctrine of Jansenius still subsisted between the clergy and the Parliament; and seemed to acquire additional fury from the violence of the Archbishop of Paris, a haughty, turbulent prelate, whose pride and bigotry were sufficient to embroil one half of Christendom. The northern powers enjoyed a perfect tranquillity: the States-General of the United Provinces were engrossed by plans of national economy. Spain was intent upon extending her commerce, bringing her manufactures to perfection, and repressing the insolence of the Barbary corsairs. His Portuguese majesty endeavoured, by certain peremptory precautions, to check the exportation of gold coin from his dominions; and insisted upon inspecting the books of the British merchants settled at Lisbon; but they refused to comply with this demand, which was contrary to a treaty subsisting between the two crowns; and he thought proper to acquiesce in their refusal. He was much better employed, in obtaining from the pope an abolition of the annual procession called the *Auto da fe*, one of the most horrid triumphs of spiritual tyranny. The peace of Italy was secured by an offensive treaty concluded at Madrid between the emperor, his catholic majesty, the King of the Two Sicilies, and the Duke of Parma; to which treaty the King of Sardinia afterwards acceded.

DISPUTE BETWEEN HANOVER AND PRUSSIA CONCERNING EAST FRIEZELAND.

With respect to the great scheme of electing the Archduke Joseph king of the Romans, fresh objections seemed to rise from different quarters. The good un-

derstanding between the courts of Berlin and Hanover received an additional shock, from a dispute concerning the property of East Friezeland, which his Prussian majesty had secured as heir to the last possessor. His Britannic majesty, as Elector of Hanover, having pretensions to the same inheritance, his minister delivered a memorial to the diet of the empire, assembled at Ratisbon, demanding that the King of Prussia, as Elector of Brandenburgh, should be referred to the decision of the Aulic council, in regard to his claim to the estates of East Friezeland; but the king being already in possession, refused to submit his right to the determination of that or any other tribunal; and when the diet presumed to deliberate on this affair, his envoy entered a strong protest against their proceedings. At the same time he presented the other ministers with a memorial, tending to refute the Elector of Hanover's pretensions to the principality in question.

MISUNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE COURTS OF LONDON AND BERLIN.

At this juncture his Prussian majesty made no scruple of expressing his resentment against the court of London, which he seemed to consider as an officious cabal, that had no right to intermeddle in the affairs of Germany. His resident at London complained to the British ministry, that divers ships, sailing under the Prussian flag, had been stopped at sea, and even seized by English cruisers; and that his subjects had been ill treated and oppressed: he therefore demanded reparation in a peremptory tone; and in the mean time discontinued the payment of the Silesian loan, which he had charged himself with by an article in the treaty of Breslau. This was a sum of money amounting to two hundred and fifty thousand pounds, which the Emperor Charles VI. father of the reigning empress, had bor-

rowed of the subjects of Great Britain, on condition of paying an interest of six per cent. and mortgaging the silver mines of Silesia for the repayment of the principal. These devolved to the King of Prussia with this encumbrance, and he continued to pay the interest punctually till this juncture, when the payment was stopped; and he published a paper, entitled "An Exposition of the Motives which influenced his Conduct on this Occasion." In his memorial to the ministry of Great Britain he alleged, that eighteen Prussian ships, and thirty-three neutral vessels, in which the subjects of Prussia were concerned, had been unjustly seized by English privateers: his account of damages amounted to a very considerable sum; and he demanded, in the most dogmatic terms, that the affair should be finally discussed in the term of three months from the date of his remonstrance. The exposition and memorial were subjected to the examination of the ablest civilians in England, who refuted every article of the charge with equal precision and perspicuity. They proved, that captures by sea fell properly under the cognizance of those powers under whose jurisdiction the seizures were made; and, therefore, his Prussian majesty could not, consistent with the law of nations, determine these disputes in his own tribunals. They demonstrated, by undoubted evidence, the falsity of many facts alleged in the memorial, as well as the fairness of the proceedings by which some few of the Prussian vessels had been condemned; and made it appear, that no insult or injury had been offered to the subjects of Prussia. Finally, they observed, that the Silesian loan was a private transaction of such a nature, that, even if a war had happened between the Emperor Charles VI. and his Britannic majesty, this must have been held sacred and inviolable: that when the empress-queen ceded Silesia to the King of Prussia, this monarch charged himself with the repayment of the loan, which, being

a private debt and transferable, was now diffused into different countries, and become the property of many others besides the subjects of Great Britain. They wound up their chain of reasoning by observing, that, according to agreement with the emperor, the whole of this loan should have been repaid in the year one thousand seven hundred and forty-five; whereas the complaints specified in the Prussian memorial were founded on facts posterior to that period. Whether his Prussian majesty was convinced by these reasons, and desisted from principle, or thought proper to give up his claim upon other political considerations; certain it is, he no longer insisted upon satisfaction, but ordered the payments of the Silesian loan to be continued without further interruption: a report, indeed, was circulated, that advantage had been taken of the demur by a certain prince, who employed his agents to buy up great part of the loan at a considerable discount.

IMPROVEMENT OF POMERANIA.

How much soever the King of Prussia may be the subject of censure on this occasion, it must be allowed that, with regard to his own subjects, he acted as a wise legislator, and the father of his country. He peopled the deserts of Pomerania, by encouraging with royal bounties a great number of industrious emigrants to settle in that province; the face of which, in a very few years, underwent the most agreeable alterations. Above sixty new villages arose amidst a barren waste, and every part of the country exhibited marks of successful cultivation. Those solitary and desolate plains, where no human footsteps had for many ages been seen, were now converted into fields of corn. The farms were regularly parcelled out; the houses multiplied, and teemed with population: the happy peasants, sheltered in a peculiar manner under their king's

protection, sowed their grounds in peace, and reaped their harvests in security. The same care and indulgence were extended to the unpeopled parts of other provinces within the Prussian dominions, and extraordinary encouragement was granted to all French Protestants who should come and settle under the government of this political sage.

TREATY WITH THE ELECTOR PALATINE.

The courts of Vienna and Hanover still employed their chief attention upon the scheme of electing a king of the Romans; and the Elector of Mentz, influenced by the majority of the college, had convoked an electoral diet for that purpose; but strong protests against this convocation were entered by the Electors of Cologn and Palatine, insomuch that it was thought expedient to conciliate this last, by taking some steps in his favour, with respect to the satisfaction he demanded from the empress-queen and his Britannic majesty. His claim upon the court of Vienna amounted to three millions of florins, by way of indemnification for the losses he had sustained during the war. He demanded of the King of England twenty thousand pounds sterling, for provision and forage furnished to the British troops while they acted on the Maine; and the like sum for the like purposes from the States-General of the United Provinces. The empress-queen could not help remonstrating against this demand as exorbitant in itself, and the more unreasonable, as the Elector Palatine, at the death of her father, had openly declared against the Pragmatic Sanction, which he had guaranteed in the most solemn manner: she, therefore, observed, that the damage he had sustained, in consequence of that declaration, ought to be considered as the common fate of war. These reasons, though conclusive and irrefragable in the usual way of arguing, made no impres-

sion upon the Palatine, who perfectly well understood his own importance, and was determined to seize this opportunity of turning it to the best advantage. The court of Vienna, and the maritime powers, finding him thus obstinately attached to his own interest, resolved to bring him over to their views at any rate, and commenced a negotiation with him, which produced a formal treaty. By this convention his demands in money were fixed at twelve hundred thousand Dutch florins, to be paid at three instalments, five hundred thousand by the empress-queen, and the remaining seven hundred thousand by the King of Great Britain and the States-General, according to the proportion established in former treaties. The privilege of *Non appellendo* for the duchy of Deux-ponts was confirmed to his electoral highness, together with some other rights and pretensions, in consideration of his concurring with the other electors in the choice of a king of the Romans, to be elected according to the customs prescribed by the laws and constitutions of the empire. He likewise engaged to join them in settling the articles of the capitulation with the king of the Romans, emperor *in futuro*. Yet, even after the concurrence of this prince was secured, the purposed election proved abortive, from the strong objections that were started, and the strenuous opposition which was made by his Prussian majesty, who perhaps aspired in secret at the imperial dignity, which the empress-queen took all this pains to perpetuate in her own family.

SESSION OPENED.

The King of Great Britain, returning from the Continent, opened the session of Parliament on the eleventh day of January with a speech, implying, that all his views and negotiations had been conducted and directed

to preserve and secure the duration of the general peace, so agreeable and necessary to the welfare of all Europe: that he had the satisfaction to be assured of a good disposition in all the powers that were his allies, to adhere to the same salutary object. He exhorted them to continue their attention to the reduction of the national debt, the augmentation of the sinking-fund, and the improvement of the public revenue. He recommended to their serious consideration what further laws and regulations might be necessary for suppressing those crimes and disorders, of which the public had so justly complained; and concluded with an assurance, that his hearty concurrence and endeavours should never be wanting in any measure that might promote their welfare and prosperity. The addresses in answer to this speech were couched in the usual form of implicit approbation; but that of the Commons did not pass without question. The Earl of E—— took exceptions to one paragraph, in which they acknowledged his majesty's wisdom, as well as goodness, in pursuing such measures as must contribute to maintain and render permanent the general tranquillity of Europe; and declared their satisfaction at the assurances his majesty had received from his allies, that they were all attached to the same salutary object. His lordship expatiated on the absurdity of these compliments at such a juncture, when the peace of Europe was so precarious, and the English nation had so much cause of complaint and dissatisfaction. He was seconded by some other individuals, who declaimed with great vivacity against continental connexions; and endeavoured to expose the weakness and folly of the whole system of foreign measures which our ministry had lately pursued. It must be owned, indeed, that they might have chosen a better opportunity to compliment their sovereign on the permanency of the peace than at this juncture, when they must have seen themselves on the very brink of a new

rupture with the most formidable power in Europe. But the truth is, these addresses to the throne had been long considered as compliments of course, implying no more than a respectful attachment to their sovereign: accordingly, both Houses agreed to their respective addresses without division. The two grand committees of supply and of ways and means being established, the business of the House was transacted without much altercation; and the people had great reason to be satisfied with their moderate proceedings. Ten thousand seamen, and the usual number of land forces, were retained for the service of the ensuing year. They provided for the maintenance of the new colony in Nova Scotia, the civil establishment of Georgia, the support of the castles on the coast of Guinea, and the erection of a new fort at Anamaboa, where the French had attempted to make a settlement; and they enabled his majesty to fulfil his engagements with the King of Poland and the Elector of Bavaria.

The supplies, including grants for former deficiencies and services, for which no provision had been made in the course of the last year, did not exceed two millions one hundred thirty-two thousand seven hundred and seven pounds, seventeen shillings, and two-pence halfpenny: in order to defray which expense they assigned the duty on malt, &c., the land-tax at two shillings in the pound, the surplus of certain funds in the exchequer, and the sum of four hundred and twenty thousand pounds out of the sinking-fund; so that the exceedings amounted to near three hundred thousand pounds[g]. As for the national debt, it now stood at the enormous sum of seventy-four millions three hundred sixty-eight thousand four hundred and fifty-one pounds,

[g] Several duties on salt, as well as on red and white herrings delivered out for home consumption, were rendered perpetual, though subject to be redeemed by Parliament; and it was provided, that the debt contracted upon these duties being discharged, all the after produce of them should become part of the sinking-fund.

fifteen shillings, and one penny; and the sinking-fund produced one million seven hundred thirty-five thousand five hundred and twenty-nine pounds, six shillings, and ten-pence farthing.

GAME ACT.

One of the first measures brought upon the carpet, in the course of this session, was an act containing regulations for the better preservation of the game, of which so great havoc had been made by poachers, and other persons unqualified to enjoy that diversion, that the total extirpation of it was apprehended.

ACT FOR PERFORMING QUARANTINE.

The next step taken by the Commons was an affair of much greater consequence to the community, being a bill for obliging ships the more effectually to perform quarantine, in order to prevent the plague from being imported from foreign countries into Great Britain. For this purpose it was ordained, that if this dreadful visitation should appear in any ship to the northward of Cape Finisterre, the master or commander should immediately proceed to the harbour of New Grimsby, in one of the islands of Scilly, and there communicate the discovery to some officer of the customs, who should, with the first opportunity, transmit this intelligence to another custom-house officer in the nearest port of England, to be by him forwarded to one of his majesty's principal secretaries of state. In the mean time the ship should remain at the said island, and not an individual presume to go ashore until his majesty's pleasure should be known. It was also provided, that in case the master of a ship thus infected should not be able to make the islands of Scilly, or be forced up either channel by violent winds, he should not enter any

frequented harbour; but remain in some open road, until he could receive orders from his majesty, or the privy council: that, during this interval, he should avoid all intercourse with the shore, or any person or vessel whatsoever, on pain of being deemed guilty of felony, and suffering death without benefit of clergy.

ACT FOR PREVENTING THE PLUNDERING OF SHIPWRECKED VESSELS.

In order the more effectually to repress the barbarous practice of plundering ships which have the misfortune to suffer shipwreck—a practice which prevailed upon many different parts of the British coast, to the disgrace of the nation, and the scandal of human nature—a bill was prepared, containing clauses to enforce the laws against such savage delinquents, who prowl along the shore, like hungry wolves, in hope of preying upon their fellow-creatures; and certain provisions for the relief of the unhappy sufferers[h]. When the mutiny-bill fell under deliberation, the Earl of Egmont proposed a new clause for empowering and requiring regimental courts-martial to examine witnesses upon oath in all their trials. The proposal occasioned a debate, in which the ministry were pretty equally divided; but the clause was disapproved by the majority, and this annual bill was enacted into a law without any alteration.

BILL RELATING TO THE BOUNTY ON CORN EXPORTED.

The next bill was framed in consequence of divers

[h] By the new law, the clerk of the peace in the county where the crime shall be committed is obliged, upon receiving proper information, to prosecute the offenders at the expense of the county. It was likewise proposed, that in case no prosecution of this nature should be commenced within a certain limited time after the information should have been legally given, in that case the county might be sued by the person who had sustained the damage, and obliged to indemnify him for his loss; but this clause was rejected by the majority; and the bill, having made its way through both Houses, received the royal assent.

petitions presented by the exporters of corn, who complained that the bounties were not paid, and prayed that the House would make proper provision for that purpose. A bill was accordingly brought in, importing, that interest after the rate of three per cent. should be allowed upon every debenture for the bounty on the exportation of corn, payable by the receiver-general or cashier of the customs, until the principal could be discharged out of such customs or duties as are appropriated for the payment of this bounty. This premium on the exportation of corn ought not to be granted, except when the lowness of the market price in Great Britain proves that there is a superabundance in the kingdom; otherwise the exporter will find his account in depriving our own labourers of their bread, in order to supply our rivals at an easier rate: for example, suppose wheat in England should sell at twenty shillings a quarter, the merchant might export into France, and afford it to the people of that kingdom for eighteen shillings, because the bounty on exportation would, even at that rate, afford him a considerable advantage.

TURKEY TRADE LAID OPEN.

A great number of merchants having presented petitions from different parts of the kingdom, representing that the trade of Turkey was greatly decreased, ascribing this diminution to the exclusive charter enjoyed by a monopoly, and praying that the trade might be laid open to all his majesty's subjects, one of the members for Liverpool moved for leave to bring in a bill for this purpose. Such a measure had been twice before proposed without success; but now it was adopted without opposition. A bill was immediately introduced; and, notwithstanding all the interest and efforts of the Turkey company, who petitioned the House against it, and were heard by their counsel, it passed through both

Houses, and received the royal sanction. By this regulation any British subject may obtain the freedom of the Turkey company, by paying or rendering a fine of twenty pounds; and all the members are secured from the tyranny of oppressive by-laws, contrived by any monopolizing cabal[i].

NATURALIZATION OF THE JEWS.

But this session was chiefly distinguished by an act for naturalizing Jews, and a bill for the better preventing clandestine marriages. The first of these, which passed without much opposition in the House of Lords, from whence it descended to the Commons, was entitled "An Act to permit Persons professing the Jewish Religion to be naturalized by Parliament, and for other Purposes therein mentioned." It was supported by some petitions of merchants and manufacturers, who, upon examination, appeared to be Jews, or their dependents; and countenanced by the ministry, who thought they foresaw, in the consequences of such naturalization, a great accession to the monied interest, and a considerable increase of their own influence among the individuals of that community. They boldly affirmed, that such a law would greatly conduce to the advantage of the nation; that it would encourage persons of wealth to remove with their effects from foreign parts into Great Britain, increase the commerce and the credit of the kingdom, and set a laudable example of industry, temperance, and frugality. Such, however,

[i] Several other bills were passed—one for regulating the number of public-houses, and the more easy conviction of persons selling ale and strong liquors without licence; an act which empowered the justices of peace to tyrannize over their fellow-subjects—a second, enabling the magistrates of Edinburgh to improve, enlarge, and adorn the avenues and streets of that city, according to a concerted plan, to be executed by voluntary subscription—a third, allowing the exportation of wool and woollen yarn from Ireland into any port of Great Britain—and a fourth, prescribing the breadth of the wheels belonging to heavy carriages, that the high roads of the kingdom might be the better preserved.

were not the sentiments of the lord mayor, aldermen, and commons of the city of London in common council assembled, who, in a petition to Parliament, expressed their apprehension that the bill, if passed into a law, would tend greatly to the dishonour of the christian religion, endanger the excellent constitution, and be highly prejudicial to the interest and trade of the kingdom in general, and of the city of London in particular. Another petition to the same purpose was next day presented to the House, subscribed by merchants and traders of the city of London; who, among other allegations, observed, that the consequences of such a naturalization would greatly affect their trade and commerce with foreign nations, particularly with Spain and Portugal. Counsel was heard, evidence examined, and the bill produced violent debates, in which there seemed to be more passion than patriotism, more declamation than argument. The adversaries of the bill affirmed, that such a naturalization would deluge the kingdom with brokers, usurers, and beggars; that the rich Jews, under the shadow of this indulgence, would purchase lands, and even advowsons; so as not only to acquire an interest in the legislature, but also to influence the constitution of the church of Christ, to which they were the inveterate and professed enemies: that the lower class of that nation, when thus admitted to the right of denizens, would interfere with the industrious natives who earn their livelihood by their labour; and by dint of the most parsimonious frugality, to which the English are strangers, work at an under price; so as not only to share, but even in a manner to exclude them from all employment: that such an adoption of vagrant Jews into the community, from all parts of the world, would rob the real subjects of their birthright, disgrace the character of the nation, expose themselves to the most dishonourable participation and intrusion, endanger the constitution both in church and state, and

be an indelible reproach upon the established religion of the country. Some of these orators seemed transported even to a degree of enthusiasm. They prognosticated that the Jews would multiply so much in number, engross such wealth, and acquire so great power and influence in Great Britain, that their persons would be revered, their customs imitated, and Judaism become the fashionable religion of the English. Finally, they affirmed that such an act was directly flying in the face of the prophecy, which declares, that the Jews shall be a scattered people, without country or fixed habitation, until they shall be converted from their infidelity, and gathered together in the land of their forefathers. These arguments and apprehensions, which were in reality frivolous and chimerical, being industriously circulated among the vulgar, naturally prejudiced against the Jewish people, excited such a ferment throughout the nation, as ought to have deterred the ministry from the prosecution of such an unpopular measure; which, however, they had courage enough to maintain against all opposition. The bill passed the ordeal of both Houses, and his majesty vouchsafed the royal sanction to this law in favour of the Hebrew nation. The truth is, it might have increased the wealth, and extended the commerce, of Great Britain, had it been agreeable to the people; and as the naturalized Jews would still have been excluded from all civil and military offices, as well as from other privileges enjoyed by their christian brethren, in all probability they would have gradually forsaken their own unprofitable and obstinate infidelity, opened their eyes to the shining truths of the gospel, and joined their fellow-subjects in embracing the doctrines of Christianity. But no ministry ought to risk an experiment, how plausible soever it might be, if they find it, as this was, an object of the people's unconquerable aversion. What rendered this unpopular measure the more impolitic,

was the unseasonable juncture at which it was carried into execution, that is, at the eve of a general election for a new Parliament, when a minister ought carefully to avoid every step which may give umbrage to the body of the people. The Earl of Eg——t, who argued against the bill with equal power and vivacity, in describing the effect it might have upon that occasion, "I am amazed (said he) that this consideration makes no impression. When that day, which is not far off, shall arrive, I shall not fear to set my foot upon any ground of election in the kingdom, in opposition to any one man among you, or any new Christian, who has voted or appeared in favour of this naturalization."

MARRIAGE ACT.

Another bill, transmitted from the Upper House, met with a reception equally unfavourable among the Commons, though it was sustained on the shoulders of the majority, and thus forced its way to the throne, where it obtained the royal approbation. The practice of solemnizing clandestine marriages, so prejudicial to the peace of families, and so often productive of misery to the parties themselves thus united, was an evil that prevailed to such a degree as claimed the attention of the legislature. The sons and daughters of great and opulent families, before they had acquired knowledge and experience, or attained to the years of discretion, were every day seduced in their affections, and inveigled into matches big with infamy and ruin; and these were greatly facilitated by the opportunities that occurred of being united instantaneously by the ceremony of marriage, in the first transport of passion, before the destined victim had time to cool or deliberate on the subject. For this pernicious purpose, there was a band of profligate miscreants, the refuse of the clergy, dead to every sentiment of virtue, abandoned to all sense of decency

and decorum, for the most part prisoners for debt or delinquency, and indeed the very outcasts of human society, who hovered about the verge of the Fleet-prison to intercept customers, plying like porters for employment, and performed the ceremony of marriage without licence or question, in cellars, garrets, or alehouses, to the scandal of religion, and the disgrace of that order which they professed. The ease with which this ecclesiastical sanction was obtained, and the vicious disposition of those wretches, open to the practices of fraud and corruption, were productive of polygamy, indigence, conjugal infidelity, prostitution, and every curse that could embitter the married state. A remarkable case of this nature having fallen under the cognizance of the Peers, in an appeal from an inferior tribunal, that House ordered the judges to prepare a new bill for preventing such abuses; and one was accordingly framed, under the auspices of Lord Hardwicke, at that time Lord High Chancellor of England. In order to anticipate the bad effects of clandestine marriages, this new statute enacted, that the banns should be regularly published, three successive Sundays, in the church of the parish where the parties dwell: that no licence should be granted to marry in any place, where one of the parties has not dwelt at least a month, except a special licence by the archbishop: that if any marriage should be solemnized in any other place than a church or a chapel, without a special licence; or in a public chapel, without having published the banns, or obtained a licence of some person properly qualified, the marriage should be void, and the person who solemnized it transported for seven years: that marriages, by licence, of parties under age, without consent of parent or guardian, should be null and void, unless the party under age be a widow, and the parent refusing consent a widow married again: that when the consent of a mother or guardian is refused from caprice, or such parent or

guardian be *non compos mentis*, or beyond sea, the minor should have recourse for relief to the court of chancery: that no suit should be commenced to compel a celebration of marriage, upon pretence of any contract: that all marriages should be solemnized before two witnesses, and an entry be made in a book kept for that purpose, whether it was by banns or licence, whether either of the parties was under age, or the marriage celebrated with the consent of parent or guardian; and this entry to be signed by the minister, the parties, and the witnesses: that a false licence or certificate, or destroying register books, should be deemed felony, either in principal or accessary, and punished with death. The bill, when first considered in the Lower House, gave rise to a variety of debates; in which the members appeared to be divided rather according to their real sentiments, than by the rules of any political distinction; for some principal servants of the government freely differed in opinion from the minister, who countenanced the bill; while, on the other hand, he was, on this occasion, supported by certain chiefs of the opposition, and the disputes were maintained with extraordinary eagerness and warmth. The principal objections imported, that such restrictions on marriage would damp the spirit of love and propagation; promote mercenary matches, to the ruin of domestic happiness, as well as to the prejudice of posterity and population; impede the circulation of property, by preserving the wealth of the kingdom among a kind of aristocracy of opulent families, who would always intermarry within their own pale; subject the poor to many inconveniences and extraordinary expense, from the nature of the forms to be observed; and throw an additional power into the hands of the chancellor. They affirmed, that no human power had a right to dissolve a vow solemnly made in the sight of heaven; and that, in proportion as the bill prevented clandestine marriages, it would encourage

fornication and debauchery, insomuch as the parties restrained from indulging their mutual passions in an honourable manner, would be tempted to gratify them by stealth, at the hazard of their reputation. In a word, they foresaw a great number of evils in the train of this bill, which have not yet been realized. On the other side, its advocates endeavoured to refute these arguments, and some of them spoke with great strength and precision. The bill underwent a great number of alterations and amendments; which were not effected without violent contest and altercation. At length, however, it was floated through both Houses on the tide of a great majority, and steered into the safe harbour of royal approbation. Certain it is, the abuse of clandestine marriage might have been removed upon much easier terms than those imposed upon the subject by this bill, which, after all, hath been found ineffectual, as it may be easily eluded by a short voyage to the Continent, or a moderate journey to North Britain, where the indissoluble knot may be tied without scruple or interruption.

DELIBERATIONS CONCERNING THE SUGAR COLONIES.

Over and above these new statutes, there were some other subjects which occasionally employed the attention of the Commons; such as the state of the British sugar colonies, which was considered, in consequence of petitions presented by the sugar-refiners and grocers of London, Westminster, and Bristol, complaining of the exorbitant price demanded and given for sugars imported from Jamaica; desiring that the proprietors of land in Jamaica might be obliged to cultivate greater quantities of ground for raising sugar-canes, or that they (the petitioners) might have leave to import muscovado sugars from other countries, when the price of

those imported from Jamaica should exceed a certain rate. This remonstrance was taken into consideration by a committee of the whole House; and a great number of evidences and papers being examined, they resolved, that the peopling of Jamaica with white inhabitants, and cultivating the lands thereof, would be the most proper measure for securing that island, and increasing the trade and navigation between it and Great Britain, and other parts of his majesty's dominions: that the endeavours hitherto used by the legislature of Jamaica to increase the number of white inhabitants, and enforce the cultivation of lands, in the manner that might best conduce to the security and defence of that island, had not been effectual for these purposes. The House ordered a bill to be founded on these resolutions; but this was postponed, until the ministry should receive more full information touching the true state of that island. The planters of Jamaica laboured under many grievances and hardships, from divers heavy impositions and restrictions; and a detail of these was transmitted in a representation to his majesty, which was referred to the consideration of the commissioners of trade and plantations. The cause of the planters was defended vigorously, and managed in the House of Commons by Alderman Beckford, a gentleman of vast possessions in the island of Jamaica, who perfectly well understood, and strenuously supported, the interest of that his native country.

FATE OF THE REGISTER-BILL.

Abortive also proved the attempt to establish a law for keeping an annual register of marriages, births, deaths, the individuals who received alms, and the total number of people in Great Britain. A bill for this purpose was presented by Mr. Potter, a gentleman of pregnant parts and spirited elocution; who, enume-

rating the advantages of such a law, observed, that it would ascertain the number of the people, and the collective strength of the nation; consequently, point out those places where there is a defect or excess of population, and certainly determine whether a general naturalization would be advantageous or prejudicial to the community; that it would decide what number of men might, on any sudden emergency, be levied for the defence of the kingdom; and whether the nation is gainer or loser by sending its natives to settle, and our troops to defend distant colonies; that it would be the means of establishing a local administration of civil government, or a police upon certain fixed principles, the want of which hath been long a reproach to the nation, a security to vice, and an encouragement to idleness; that in many cases where all other evidence is wanting, it would enable suitors to recover their right in courts of justice, facilitate an equal and equitable assessment in raising the present taxes, and laying future impositions; specify the lineal descents, relations, and alliances of families; lighten the intolerable burthens incurred by the public, from innumerable and absurd regulations relating to the poor; provide for them by a more equal exertion of humanity, and effectually screen them from all risk of perishing by hunger, cold, cruelty, and oppression. Whether such a law would have answered the sanguine expectations of its patron, we shall not pretend to determine; though, in our opinion, it must have been attended with very salutary consequences, particularly in restraining the hand of robbery and violence, in detecting fraud, bridling the ferocity of a licentious people, and establishing a happy system of order and subordination. At first the bill met with little opposition, except from Mr. Thornton, member for the city of York, who inveighed against it with great fervour, as a measure that savoured of French policy, to which the English nation ever had the utmost

aversion. He affirmed, that the method in which it was proposed this register should be kept would furnish the enemies of Great Britain with continual opportunities of knowing the strength or weakness of the nation; that it would empower an ill-designing minister to execute any scheme subversive of public liberty, invest parish and petty officers of the peace with exorbitant powers, and cost the nation about fifty thousand pounds a year to carry the scheme into execution. These arguments, which we apprehend are extremely frivolous and inconclusive, had great weight with a considerable number, who joined in the opposition, while the ministry stood neutral. Nevertheless, after having undergone some amendments, it was conveyed to the Lords, by whom it was, at the second reading, thrown out, as a scheme of very dangerous tendency. The legislature of Great Britain have, on some occasions, been more startled at the distant shadow of a bare possibility, than at the real approach of the most dangerous innovation.

SIR HANS SLOANE'S MUSEUM PURCHASED BY PARLIAMENT.

From the usual deliberations on civil and commercial concerns, the attention of the Parliament, which had seldom or never turned upon literary avocations, was called off by an extraordinary subject of this nature. Sir Hans Sloane, the celebrated physician and naturalist, well known through all the civilized countries of Europe for his ample collection of rarities, culled from the animal, vegetable, and mineral kingdoms, as well as of antiquities and curiosities of art, had directed, in his last will, that his valuable museum, together with his numerous library, should be offered to the Parliament, for the use of the public, in consideration of their paying a certain sum, in compensation, to his heirs. His terms were embraced by the Commons, who agreed to pay

twenty thousand pounds for the whole, supposed to be worth four times that sum; and a bill was prepared for purchasing this museum, together with the Harleian collection of manuscripts, so denominated from its founder, Robert Harley, Earl of Oxford, Lord High Treasurer of England, and now offered to the public by his daughter, the Duchess of Portland. It was proposed that these purchases should be joined to the famous Cottonian library, and a suitable repository provided for them and the king's library, which had long lain neglected and exposed to the injuries of the weather in the old dormitory at Westminster. Accordingly, trustees and governors, consisting of the most eminent persons of the kingdom, were appointed, and regulations established for the management of this noble museum, which was deposited in Montagu-house, one of the most magnificent edifices in England, where it is subjected, without reserve, to the view of the public, under certain necessary restrictions, and exhibits a glorious monument of national taste and liberality[j]. In the beginning of June the session of Parliament was closed by his majesty, who mentioned nothing particular in his speech, but that the state of foreign affairs had suffered no alteration since their meeting.

The genius of the English people is perhaps incompatible with a state of perfect tranquillity; if it is not ruffled by foreign provocations, or agitated by unpopular measures of domestic administration, it will undergo

[j] The library of Sir Hans Sloane consisted of above fifty thousand volumes, including about three hundred and fifty books of drawings, and three thousand five hundred and sixteen manuscripts, besides a multitude of prints. The museum comprehended an infinite number of medals, coins, urns, utensils, seals, cameos, intaglios, precious stones, vessels of agate and jasper, crystals, spars, fossils, metals, minerals, ores, earths, sands, salts, bitumens, sulphurs, amber, ambergrise, talcs, micæ, testacea, corals, sponges, echini, echenites, asteriæ, trochi, crustaciæ, stellæ marinæ, fishes, birds, eggs, and nests, vipers, serpents, quadrupeds, insects, human calculi, anatomical preparations, seeds, gums, roots, dried plants, pictures, drawings, and mathematical instruments. All these articles, with a short account of each, are specified in thirty-eight volumes in folio, and eight in quarto.

temporary fermentations from the turbulent ingredients inherent in its own constitution. Tumults are excited, and faction kindled into rage and inveteracy, by incidents of the most frivolous nature. At this juncture the metropolis of England was divided and discomposed in a surprising manner, by a dispute in itself of so little consequence to the community, that it would not deserve a place in a general history, if it did not serve to convey a characteristic idea of the English nation. In the beginning of the year an obscure damsel, of low degree, whose name was Elizabeth Canning, promulgated a report, which in a little time attracted the attention of the public. She affirmed, that on the first day of the new year, at night, she was seized under Bedlam-wall by two ruffians, who having stripped her of her upper apparel, secured her mouth with a gag, and threatened to murder her should she make the least noise; that they conveyed her on foot about ten miles, to a place called Enfield-wash, and brought her to the house of one Mrs. Wells, where she was pillaged of her stays; and, because she refused to turn prostitute, confined in a cold, damp, separate, and unfurnished apartment; where she remained a whole month, without any other sustenance than a few stale crusts of bread, and about a gallon of water; till at length she forced her way through a window, and ran home to her mother's house, almost naked, in the night of the twenty-ninth of January. This story, improbable and unsupported, operated so strongly on the passions of the people in the neighbourhood of Aldermanbury, where Canning's mother lived, and particularly among fanatics of all denominations, that they raised voluntary contributions, with surprising eagerness, in order to bring the supposed delinquents to justice. Warrants were granted for apprehending Wells, who kept the house at Enfield-wash, and her accomplices, the servant-maid, whose name was Virtue Hall, and one Squires,

an old gipsy-woman, which last was charged by Canning of having robbed her of her stays. Wells, though acquitted of the felony, was punished as a bawd. Hall turned evidence for Canning, but afterwards recanted. Squires, the gipsy, was convicted of the robbery, though she produced undoubted evidence to prove that she was at Abbotsbury in Dorsetshire that very night in which the felony was said to be committed, and Canning and her friends fell into divers contradictions during the course of the trial. By this time the prepossession of the common people in her favour had risen to such a pitch of enthusiasm, that the most palpable truths which appeared on the other side had no other effect than that of exasperating them to the most dangerous degree of rage and revenge. Some of the witnesses for Squires, though persons of unblemished character, were so intimidated, that they durst not enter the court; and those who had resolution enough to give evidence in her behalf, ran the risk of assassination from the vulgar that surrounded the place. On this occasion, Sir Crisp Gascoyne, Lord Mayor of London, behaved with that laudable courage and humanity which ought ever to distinguish the chief magistrate of such a metropolis. Considering the improbability of the charge, the heat, partiality, and blind enthusiasm with which it was prosecuted, and being convinced of the old woman's innocence by a great number of affidavits, voluntarily sent up from the country by persons of unquestionable credit, he, in conjunction with some other worthy citizens, resolved to oppose the torrent of vulgar prejudice. Application was made to the throne for mercy: the case was referred to the attorney and solicitor-general, who, having examined the evidences on both sides, made their report in favour of Squires to the king and council; and this poor old creature was indulged with his majesty's pardon. This affair was now swelled up into such a faction as divided the greater part of the king-

dom, including the rich as well as the poor, the high as well as the humble. Pamphlets and pasquinades were published on both sides of the dispute, which became the general topic of conversation in all assemblies, and people of all ranks espoused one or other party with as much warmth and animosity as had ever inflamed the whigs and tories, even at the most rancorous period of their opposition. Subscriptions were opened, and large sums levied, on one side, to prosecute for perjury the persons on whose evidence the pardon had been granted. On the other hand, those who had interested themselves for the gipsy resolved to support her witnesses, and, if possible, detect the imposture of Canning. Bills of perjury were preferred on both sides. The evidences for Squires were tried and acquitted: at first Canning absconded; but afterwards surrendered to take her trial, and being, after a long hearing, found guilty, was transported to the British colonies. The zeal of her friends, however, seemed to be inflamed by her conviction; and those who carried on the prosecution against her were insulted, even to the danger of their lives. They supplied her with necessaries of all sorts, paid for her transportation in a private ship, where she enjoyed all the comforts and conveniences that could be afforded in that situation, and furnished her with such recommendations as secured to her a very agreeable reception in New England.

EXECUTION OF DR. CAMERON.

Next to this very remarkable transaction, the incident that principally distinguished this year in England was the execution of Dr. Archibald Cameron, a native of North Britain, and brother to Cameron of Lochiel, chief of that numerous and warlike tribe, who had taken the field with the prince-pretender. After the battle of Culloden, where he was dangerously wounded, he found

means to escape to the Continent. His brother, the doctor, had accompanied him in all his expeditions, though not in a military capacity, and was included with him in the act of attainder passed against those who had been concerned in the rebellion. Notwithstanding the imminent danger attending such an attempt, the doctor returned privately to Scotland, in order (as it was reported) to recover a sum of money belonging to the pretender, which had been embezzled by his adherents in that country. Whatever may have been his inducement to revisit his native country under such a predicament, certain it is, he was discovered, apprehended, conducted to London, confined in the Tower, examined by the privy-council, and produced in the court of King's Bench, where his identity being proved by several witnesses, he received sentence of death, and was executed at Tyburn. The terror and resentment of the people, occasioned by the rebellion, having by this time subsided, their humane passions did not fail to operate in favour of this unfortunate gentleman: their pity was mingled with esteem, arising from his personal character, which was altogether unblemished, and his deportment on this occasion, which they could not help admiring, as the standard of manly fortitude and decorum. The populace, though not very subject to tender emotions, were moved to compassion and even to tears, by his behaviour at the place of execution; and many sincere well-wishers to the present establishment thought that the sacrifice of this victim, at such a juncture, could not redound either to its honour or security.

TUMULTS IN DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE KINGDOM.

The turbulent spirit, which is never totally extinguished in this island, manifested itself in sundry tumults that broke out in different parts of South Britain. The

price of provisions, and bread in particular, being raised to an exorbitant rate, in consequence of an absurd exportation of corn, for the sake of the bounty, a formidable body of colliers, and other labouring people, raised an insurrection at Bristol, began to plunder the corn-vessels in the harbour, and commit such outrages in the city, that the magistrates were obliged to have recourse to the military power. A troop of dragoons were sent to their assistance, and the insurgents were quelled, though not without some bloodshed. Commotions of the same kind were excited in Yorkshire, Manchester, and several other places in the northern counties. At Leeds, a detachment of the king's troops were obliged in their own defence to fire upon the rioters, eight or nine of whom were killed on the spot; and, indeed, so little care had been taken to restrain the licentious insolence of the vulgar by proper laws and regulations, duly executed under the eye of civil magistracy, that a military power was found absolutely necessary to maintain the peace of the kingdom.

DISTURBANCES IN FRANCE.

The tranquillity of the Continent was not endangered by any new contest or disturbance; yet the breach between the clergy and the Parliament of Paris was every day more and more widened, and the people were pretty equally divided between superstition and a regard for civil liberty. The Parliament having caused divers ecclesiastics to be apprehended, for having refused to administer the sacraments to persons in extremity, who refused to subscribe to the bull Unigenitus, all of them declared they acted according to the direction of the Archbishop of Paris. Application being made to this haughty prelate, he treated the deputies of the Parliament with the most supercilious contempt, and even seemed to brave the power and authority of that body. They, on

the other hand, proceeded to take cognizance of the recusant clergy, until their sovereign ordered them to desist. Then they presented remonstrances to his majesty, reminding him of their privileges, and the duty of their station, which obliged them to do justice on all delinquents. In the mean time, they continued to perform their functions, and even commenced a prosecution against the Bishop of Orleans, whom they summoned to attend their tribunal. Next day they received from Versailles a *lettre de cachet*, accompanied by letters patent, commanding them to suspend all prosecutions relating to the refusal of the sacraments; and ordering the letters patent to be registered. Instead of obeying these commands, they presented new remonstrances, for answers to which they were referred to the king's former declarations. In consequence of this intimation, they had spirit enough to resolve, "that whereas certain evil-minded persons had prevented truth from reaching the throne, the chambers remained assembled, and all other business should be suspended." The affair was now become very serious. His majesty, by fresh letters patent, renewed his orders, and commanded them to proceed with their ordinary business, on pain of incurring his displeasure. They forthwith came to another resolution, importing, that they could not obey this injunction without a breach of their duty and their oath. Next day *lettres de cachet* were issued, banishing to different parts of the kingdom all the members, except those of the great chamber, which the court did not find more tractable than their brethren. They forthwith resolved to abide by the two resolutions mentioned above; and, as an instance of their unshaken fortitude, ordered an ecclesiastic to be taken into custody for refusing the sacraments. This spirited measure involved them in the fate of the rest; for they were also exiled from Paris, the citizens of which did not fail to extol their conduct with the loudest encomiums, and at the

same time to express their resentment against the clergy, who could not stir abroad without being exposed to violence or insult. The example of the Parliament of Paris was followed by that of Rouen, which had courage enough to issue orders for apprehending the Bishop of Evreux, because he had refused to appear when summoned to their tribunal. Their decrees on this occasion being annulled by the king's council of state, they presented a bold remonstrance, which, however, had no other effect than that of exasperating the ministry. A grand deputation being ordered to attend the king, they were commanded to desist from intermeddling in disputes relating to the refusal of the sacraments, and to register this injunction. At their return they had recourse to a new remonstrance; and one of their principal counsellors, who had spoken freely in the debates on this subject, was arrested by a party of dragoons, who carried him prisoner to the castle of Dourlens. In a word, the body of the people declared for the Parliament, in opposition to ecclesiastical tyranny; and, had they not been overawed by a formidable standing army, would certainly have taken up arms in defence of their liberties; while the monarch weakly suffered himself to be governed by priestly delusions; and, secure in his military appointment, seemed to set the rest of his subjects at defiance. Apprehensive, however, that these disputes would put an entire stop to the administration of justice, he, by letters patent, established a royal chamber for the prosecution of suits civil and criminal, which was opened with a solemn mass performed in the queen's chapel at the Louvre, where all the members assisted. On this occasion another difficulty occurred. The letters patent, constituting this new court, ought to have been registered by the Parliament, which was now no more. To remedy this defect, application was made to the inferior court of the Chatelet; which refusing to register them, one of its members was com-

mitted to the Bastile, and another absconded. Intimidated by this exertion of despotic power, they allowed the king's officers to enter the letters in their registers; but afterwards adopted more vigorous resolutions. The lieutenant-civil appearing in their court, all the counsellors rose up and retired, leaving him alone, and on the table an arrêt, importing, that whereas the confinement of one of their members, the prosecution of another who durst not appear, and the present calamities of the nation, gave them just apprehension for their own persons, they had, after mature deliberation, thought proper to retire. Thus a dangerous ferment was excited by the king's espousing the cause of spiritual insolence and oppression against the general voice of his people, and the plainest dictates of reason and common sense.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE DIET RELATIVE TO EAST FRIEZELAND.

The property of East Friezeland continued still to be the source of contention between the Electors of Brandenburgh and Hanover. The interests of his Britannic majesty being powerfully supported by the House of Austria, the minister of that power at the diet proposed that the affair should be taken into immediate consideration. He was seconded by the minister of Brunswick; but the envoy from Brandenburgh, having protested in form against this procedure, withdrew from the assembly, and the Brunswick minister made a counter protestation, after which he also retired. Then a motion being made, that this dispute should be referred to the decision of the Aulic council at Vienna, it was carried in the affirmative by a majority of fourteen voices. His Prussian majesty's final declaration with regard to this affair was afterwards presented to the diet, and answered in the sequel by a memorial from his Britannic majesty as Elector of Hanover. Some other petty disputes like-

wise happened between the regency of Hanover and the city of Munster; and the former claiming some bailiwicks in the territories of Bremen, sequestered certain revenues belonging to this city, in Stade and Ferden, till these claims should be satisfied.

TREATY BETWEEN THE COURT OF VIENNA AND THE DUKE OF MODENA.

The court of Vienna having dropped for the present the scheme for electing a king of the Romans, concluded a very extraordinary treaty with the Duke of Modena, stipulating, that his serene highness should be appointed perpetual governor of the duchy of Milan, with a salary of ninety thousand florins, on condition that he should maintain a body of four thousand men, to be at the disposal of the empress-queen; that her imperial majesty should have a right to place garrisons in the citadels of Mirandola and Reggio, as well as in the castle of Massa Carrara; that the Archduke Peter Leopold, third son of their imperial majesties, should espouse the daughter of the hereditary Prince of Modena, by the heiress of Massa Carrara; and in case of her dying without heirs male, the estates of that house and the duchy of Mirandola should devolve to the archduke; but in case of her having male issue, that she should enjoy the principality of Fermia, and other possessions in Hungary, claimed by the Duke of Modena, for her fortune; finally, that on the extinction of the male branch of the house of Este, all the dominions of the Duke of Modena should devolve to the house of Austria.

CONFERENCES WITH RESPECT TO NOVA SCOTIA BROKE UP.

While the powers on the Continent of Europe were thus employed in strengthening their respective inte-

rests, and concerting measures for preventing any interruption of the general tranquillity, matters were fast ripening to a fresh rupture between the subjects of Great Britain and France, in different parts of North America. We have already observed that commissaries had been appointed, and conferences opened at Paris, to determine the disputes between the two crowns, relating to the boundaries of Nova Scotia; and we took notice in general of the little arts of evasion practised by the French commissaries, to darken and perplex the dispute, and elude the pretensions of his Britannic majesty. They persisted in employing these arts of chicanery and cavil with such perseverance, that the negotiation proved abortive, the conferences broke up, and every thing seemed to portend approaching hostilities. But, before we proceed to a detail of the incidents which were the immediate forerunners of the war, we will endeavour to convey a just idea of the dispute concerning Nova Scotia; which, we apprehend, is but imperfectly understood, though of the utmost importance to the interest of Great Britain.

DESCRIPTION OF NOVA SCOTIA.

Nova Scotia, called by the French Acadia, lies between the forty-fourth and fiftieth degrees of north latitude, having New England and the Atlantic Ocean to the south and south-west, and the river and gulf of St. Lawrence to the north and north-east. The winter, which continues near seven months in this country, is intensely cold; and, without the intervention of any thing that can be called spring, it is immediately succeeded by a summer, the heat of which is almost insupportable, but of no long continuance. The soil in general is thin and barren, though some parts of it are said to be equal to the best land in England. The whole country is covered with a perpetual fog, even after

the summer has commenced. It was first possessed by the French, before they made any establishment in Canada; who, by dint of industry and indefatigable perseverance, in struggling with the many difficulties they necessarily laboured under in the infancy of this settlement, subsisted tolerably well, and increased considerably, with very little assistance from Europe; whilst we, even now, should lose the immense expense we have already been at to settle a colony there, and should see all our endeavours to that end defeated, if the support of the royal hand was withdrawn but for a moment. This country, by the possession of which an enemy would be enabled greatly to annoy all our other colonies, and, if in the hands of the French, would be of singular service both to their fishery and their sugar-islands, has frequently changed hands from the French to the English, and from the English back again to the French, till our right to it was finally settled by the twelfth article of the treaty of Utrecht, by which all the country included within the ancient limits of what was called Nova Scotia or Acadia was ceded to the English. This article was confirmed by the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle; but, for want of ascertaining distinctly what were the bounds intended to be fixed by the two nations with respect to this province, disputes arose, and commissaries, as we have observed, were appointed by both sides, to adjust the litigation.

The commissaries of the King of Great Britain conformed themselves to the rule laid down by the treaty itself, and assigned those as the ancient limits of this country which had always passed as such, from the very earliest time of any certainty, down to the conclusion of the treaty; which the two crowns had frequently declared to be such, and which the French had often admitted and allowed. These limits are, the southern bank of the river St. Lawrence to the north, and Pentagoet to the west: the country situated between these

boundaries is that which the French received by the treaty of St. Germain's, in the year one thousand six hundred and thirty-two, under the general name of Acadia. Of this country, thus limited, they continued in possession from that period to the year one thousand six hundred and fifty-four, when a descent was made upon it, under the command of Colonel Sedgwick. That these were then the undisputed limits of Acadia, his Britannic majesty's commissaries plainly proved, by a letter of Louis XIII. to the Sieurs Charnisay and La Tour, regulating their jurisdictions in Acadia; by the subsequent commissions of the French king to the same persons, as governors of Acadia, in the sequel; and by that which was afterwards granted to the Sieur Denys, in the year one thousand six hundred and fifty-four; all of which extend the bounds of this country from the river St. Lawrence to Pentagoet and New England. That these were the notions of the French with respect to the ancient limits of this province was further confirmed by the demand made by their ambassador, in the course of that same year, for the restitution of the forts Pentagoet, St. John's, and Port Royal, as forts situated in Acadia. In the year one thousand six hundred and sixty-two, upon the revival of the claim of France to the country of Acadia, which had been left undecided by the treaty of Westminster, the French ambassador, then at the court of London, assigned Pentagoet as the western, and the river St. Lawrence as the northern boundary of that country; and alleged the restitution of Acadia in the year one thousand six hundred and thirty-two, and the possession taken by France in consequence thereof, as well as the continuation of that possession, with the same limits, to the year one thousand six hundred and fifty-four, as proofs of the equity and validity of the claim he then made; in which claim, and in the manner of supporting it, he was particularly approved of by the court of France. The same court

afterwards thought it so clear, upon former determinations, and her own former possessions, that the true ancient boundaries of Acadia were Pentagoet to the west, and the river St. Lawrence to the north, that she desired no specification of limits in the treaty of Breda, but was contented with the restitution of Acadia, generally named; and, upon a dispute which arose in the execution of this treaty, France re-asserted, and Great Britain, after some discussion, agreed to the above-mentioned limits of Acadia; and France obtained possession of that country, so bounded, under the treaty of Breda. The sense of France upon this subject, in the years one thousand six hundred and eighty-five, and one thousand six hundred and eighty-seven, was also clearly manifested, in the memorials delivered at that time by the French ambassador at the court of London, complaining of some encroachments made by the English upon the coast of Acadia: he described the country as extending from isle Percée, which lies at the entrance of the river St. Lawrence, to St. George's island; and again, in a subsequent complaint, made by Mons. Barillon and Mons. de Bonrepaus to the court of Great Britain, against the judge of Pemaquid, for having seized the effects of a French merchant at Pentagoet, which, said they, was situated in Acadia, as restored to France by the treaty of Breda. To explain the sense of France, touching the bounds of Acadia in the year one thousand seven hundred, the British commissaries produced a proposal of the French ambassador, then residing in Great Britain, to restrain the limits of that country to the river St. George. They also instanced the surrender of Port Royal in the year one thousand seven hundred and ten, in which Acadia is described with the same limits with which France had received it in the years one thousand six hundred and thirty-two, and one thousand six hundred and sixty-seven. And further to ascertain the sense of both crowns, even at the treaty of

Utrecht itself, they produced the Queen of Great Britain's instructions to her ambassadors in the year one thousand seven hundred and eleven, in which they were directed to insist, "That his most christian majesty should quit all claim or title, by virtue of any former treaty, or otherwise, to the country called Nova Scotia, and expressly to Port Royal, otherwise Annapolis Royal." To these they added a manifest demonstration, founded on indisputable facts, proving that the recital of the several sorts of right which France had ever pretended to this country, and the specification of both terms, Acadia or Nova Scotia, were intended by Great Britain to obviate all doubts which had ever been made concerning the limits of Acadia, and to comprehend with more certainty all that country which France had ever received as such: finally, to specify what France considered as Acadia. During the treaty, they referred to the offers of that crown in the year one thousand seven hundred and twelve, in which she proposed to restrain the boundary of Acadia to the river St. George, as a departure from its real boundary, in case Great Britain would restore to her the possession of that country. From all these facts it plainly appears that Great Britain demanded nothing but what the fair construction of the words of the treaty of Utrecht necessarily implies; and that it is impossible for any thing to have more evident marks of candour and fairness in it, than the demand of the English on this occasion. From the variety of evidence brought in support of this claim, it evidently results, that the English commissaries assigned no limits as the ancient limits of Acadia, but those which France herself determined to be such, in the year one thousand six hundred and thirty-two; and which she possessed, in consequence of that determination, till the year one thousand six hundred and fifty-four: that in one thousand six hundred and sixty-two France claimed, and received in one thousand six hundred and sixty-nine,

the country which Great Britain now claims as Acadia, restored to France by the treaty of Breda under that general denomination: that France never considered Acadia as having any other limits than those which were assigned to it from the year one thousand six hundred and thirty-two, to the year one thousand seven hundred and ten; and that, by the treaty of Utrecht, she engaged to transfer that very same country as Acadia, which France has always asserted and possessed, and Great Britain now claims as such. Should the crown of France, therefore, be ever willing to decide what are the ancient limits of Acadia, by her own declarations so frequently made in like discussions upon the same point, by her possessions of this country for almost a century, and by her description of Acadia, during the negotiation of that very treaty upon which this doubt is raised, she cannot but admit the claim of Great Britain to be conformable to the treaty of Utrecht, and to the description of the country transferred to Great Britain by the twelfth article of that treaty. There is a consistency in the claim of the English, and a completeness in the evidence brought in support of it, which is seldom seen in discussions of this sort; for it rarely happens in disputes of such a nature between two crowns, that either of them can safely offer to have its pretensions decided by the known and repeated declarations, or the possessions of the other. To answer the force of this detail of conclusive historical facts, and to give a new turn to the real question in dispute, the French commissaries, in their memorial, laid it down as a distinction made by the treaty of Utrecht, that the ancient limits of Acadia, referred to by that treaty, are different from any with which that country may have passed under the treaties of St. Germain's and Breda; and then endeavoured to show, upon the testimonies of maps and historians, that Acadia and its limits were anciently confined to the south-eastern part of the peninsula. In support of this

system, the French commissaries had recourse to ancient maps and historians, who, as they asserted, had ever confined Acadia to the limits they assigned. They alleged, that those commissions of the French government over Acadia, which the English cited as evidence of the limits they claimed, were given as commissions over Acadia and the country around it, and not over Acadia only: that the whole of the country claimed by the English as Acadia could not possibly be supposed ever to be considered as such, because many parts of that territory always did, and still do, preserve particular and distinct names. They affirmed New France to be a province in itself; and argued that many parts of what we claim as Acadia can never have been in Acadia, because historians and the French commissions of government expressly place them in New France. They asserted that no evidence can be drawn of the opinion of any crown, with respect to the limits of any country, from its declaration during the negotiation of a treaty; and, in the end, relying upon maps and historians for the ancient limits of Acadia, they pretended that the express restitution of St. Germain's and the possession taken by France in consequence of the treaty of Breda, after a long discussion of the limits and the declaration of France during the negotiation of the treaty of Utrecht, were foreign to the point in question. In refutation of these maxims, the English commissaries proved, from an examination of the maps and historians cited by the French in support of their system, that if this question was to be decided, upon the authorities which they themselves allowed to belong, and to be applicable to this discussion, the limits which they assigned were utterly inconsistent with the best maps of all countries, which are authorities in point for almost every part of the claim of Great Britain. They showed that the French historians, Champlain and Denys, and particularly this last, with his commission in the year one

thousand six hundred and fifty-five, assigned the same northern and western limits to Acadia which they did; and that Escarbot, another of their historians, as far as any evidence can be drawn from his writings, agrees entirely with the former two. They observed, that all these evidences fall in with and confirm the better authorities of treaties, and the several transactions between the two crowns for near a century past; and that the French commissaries, by deviating from treaties, and the late proceedings of the two crowns, to ancient historians and maps, only made a transition from an authentic to an insufficient sort of evidence, and led the English commissaries into an inquiry, which proved that both the proper and the improper, the regular and the foreign, evidence upon which this matter had been rested, equally confuted the limits alleged by the French commissaries as the ancient limits of Acadia.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Ambitious Schemes of the French in North America.—Rise and Conduct of the Ohio Company.—Letter from the Governor of Virginia to the French Commander at Riviere-au-Bœuf.—Perfidious Practices of the French in Nova Scotia.—Major Laurence defeats the French Neutrals.—British Ambassador at Paris amused with general Promises.—Session opened.—Supplies granted.—Repeal of the Act for naturalizing Jews.—Motion for repealing a former Act favourable to the Jews.—East India Mutiny-Bill.—Case of Le ——.—Session closed.—Death of Mr. Pelham.—Change in the Ministry.—New Parliament assembled and prorogued.—Disputes in the Irish Parliament.—Transactions in the East Indies.—Account of the English Settlements on the Malabar and Coromandel Coast.—Dispute about the Government of Arcot.—Mahommed Ali Khan supported by the English.—Mr. Clive takes Arcot.—And defeats the Enemy in the Plains of Arani, and at Koveripauk.—He reduces three Forts, and takes M. d'Anteuil.—Chunda Saib taken and put to Death, and his Army routed.—Convention between the East India Companies of England and France.—General View of the British Colonies in North America.—New England and New York.—New Jersey.—Pennsylvania.—Maryland.—Virginia.—The two Carolinas.—Georgia.—The French surprise Logs Town, on the Ohio.—Conference with the Indians at Albany.—Colonel Washington defeated and taken by the French on the Ohio.—Divisions among the British Colonies.—The hereditary Prince of Hesse-Cassel professes the Roman Catholic Religion.—Parliament of Paris recalled from Exile.—Affairs of Spain and Portugal.—Session opened.—Supplies granted.—Bill in Behalf of Chelsea Pensioners.—Oxfordshire Election.—Message from the King to the House of Commons.—Court of Versailles amuses the English Ministry.—Session closed.

AMBITIOUS SCHEMES OF THE FRENCH IN NORTH AMERICA.

While the British ministry depended upon the success of the conferences between the commissaries of the two crowns at Paris, the French were actually employed in executing their plans of encroachment upon the Bri-

tish colonies in North America. Their scheme was to engross the whole fur-trade of that Continent; and they had already made great progress in extending a chain of forts, connecting their settlements on the river Mississippi with their possessions in Canada, along the great lakes of Erie and Ontario, which last issues into the river St. Lawrence. By these means they hoped to exclude the English from all communication and traffic with the Indian nations, even those that lay contiguous to the British settlements, and confine them within a line of their drawing, beyond which they should neither extend their trade nor plantations. Their commercial spirit did not keep pace with the gigantic strides of their ambition: they could not supply all those Indians with the necessaries they wanted, so that many of the natives had recourse to the English settlements; and this commerce produced a connexion, in consequence of which the British adventurers ventured to travel with merchandise as far as the banks of the river Ohio, that runs into the Mississippi, a great way on the other side of the Apalachian mountains, beyond which none of our colonists had ever attempted to penetrate. The tract of country lying along the Ohio is so fertile, pleasant, and inviting, and the Indians, called Twightees, who inhabit those delightful plains, were so well disposed towards a close alliance with the English, that, as far back as the year one thousand seven hundred and sixteen, Mr. Spotswood, governor of Virginia, proposed a plan for erecting a company to settle such lands upon this river as should be ceded to them by treaty with the natives; but the design was at that time frustrated, partly by the indolence and timidity of the British ministry, who were afraid of giving umbrage to the French, and partly by the jealousies and divisions subsisting between the different colonies of Great Britain. The very same circumstances encouraged the French to proceed in their progress of invasion. At length they penetrated

from the banks of the river St. Lawrence across lake Champlain, and upon the territory of New York built with impunity, and, indeed, without opposition, the fort of Crown Point, the most insolent and dangerous encroachment that they had hitherto carried into execution.

RISE AND CONDUCT OF THE OHIO COMPANY.

Governor Spotswood's scheme for an Ohio company was revived immediately after the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, when certain merchants of London, who traded to Maryland and Virginia, petitioned the government on this subject, and were indulged not only with a grant of a great tract of ground to the southward of Pennsylvania, which they promised to settle, but also with an exclusive privilege of trading with the Indians on the banks of the river Ohio. This design no sooner transpired than the French governor of Canada took the alarm, and wrote letters to the governors of New York and Pennsylvania, giving them to understand that, as the English inland traders had encroached on the French territories and privileges, by trading with the Indians under the protection of his sovereign, he would seize them wherever they could be found, if they did not immediately desist from that illicit practice. No regard being paid to this intimation, he next year caused three British traders to be arrested. Their effects were confiscated, and they themselves conveyed to Quebec, from whence they were sent prisoners to Rochelle in France, and there detained in confinement. In this situation they presented a remonstrance to the Earl of Albemarle, at that time English ambassador at Paris, and he claiming them as British subjects, they were set at liberty. Although, in answer to his lordship's memorial, the court of Versailles promised to transmit orders to the French governors in America to

use all their endeavours for preventing any disputes that might have a tendency to alter the good correspondence established between the two nations: in all probability the directions given were seemingly the very reverse of these professions, for the French commanders, partisans, and agents in America, took every step their busy genius could suggest to strengthen their own power, and weaken the influence of the English, by embroiling them with the Indian nations. This task they found the more easy, as the natives had taken offence against the English, when they understood that their lands were given away without their knowledge, and that there was a design to build forts in their country, without their consent and concurrence. Indeed the person whom the new company employed to survey the banks of the Ohio concealed his design so carefully, and behaved in other respects in such a dark mysterious manner, as could not fail to rouse the jealousy of a people naturally inquisitive, and very much addicted to suspicion. How the company proposed to settle this acquisition in despite of the native possessors it is not easy to conceive, and it is still more unaccountable that they should have neglected the natives, whose consent and assistance they might have procured at a very small expense. Instead of acting such a fair, open, and honourable part, they sent a Mr. Gist to make a clandestine survey of the country, as far as the falls of the river Ohio; and, as we have observed above, his conduct alarmed both the French and Indians. The erection of this company was equally disagreeable to the separate traders of Virginia and Pennsylvania, who saw themselves on the eve of being deprived of a valuable branch of traffic, by the exclusive charter of a monopoly; and therefore they employed their emissaries to foment the jealousy of the Indians.

The French having in a manner commenced hostilities against the English, and actually built forts on

the territories of the British allies at Niagara, and on the lake Erie, Mr. Hamilton, governor of Pennsylvania, communicated this intelligence to the Assembly of the province, and represented the necessity of erecting truck-houses, or places of strength and security, on the river Ohio, to which the traders might retire in case of insult or molestation. The proposal was approved, and money granted for the purpose; but the Assembly could not agree about the manner in which they should be erected; and in the mean time the French fortified themselves at leisure, and continued to harass the traders belonging to the British settlements. Repeated complaints of these encroachments and depredations being represented to Mr. Dinwiddie, governor of Virginia, he, towards the latter end of this very year, sent Major Washington with a letter to the commanding officer of a fort which the French had built on the Riviere-au-Bœuf, which falls into the Ohio, not far from the lake Erie. In this letter Mr. Dinwiddie expressed his surprise that the French should build forts and make settlements on the river Ohio, in the western part of the colony of Virginia, belonging to the crown of Great Britain. He complained of these encroachments, as well as of the injuries done to the subjects of Great Britain, in open violation of the law of nations, and of the treaties actually subsisting between the two crowns. He desired to know by whose authority and instructions his Britannic majesty's territories had been invaded; and required him to depart in peace, without further prosecuting a plan which must interrupt the harmony and good understanding which his majesty was desirous to continue and cultivate with the most christian king. To this spirited intimation the officer replied, that it was not his province to specify the evidence, and demonstrate the right of the king his master to the lands situated on the river Ohio; but he would transmit the letter to the Marquis du Quesne, and act

according to the answer he should receive from that nobleman. In the mean time, he said he did not think himself obliged to obey the summons of an English governor; that he commanded the fort by virtue of an order from his general, to which he was determined to conform with all the precision and resolution of a good officer. Mr. Dinwiddie expected no other reply, and therefore had projected a fort to be erected near the forks of the river. The province undertook to defray the expense, and the stores for that purpose were already provided; but, by some fatal oversight, the concurrence of the Indians was neither obtained nor solicited, and therefore they looked upon this measure with an evil eye, as a manifest invasion of their property.

PERFIDIOUS PRACTICES OF THE FRENCH IN NOVA SCOTIA.

While the French thus industriously extended their encroachments to the southward, they were not idle in the gulf of St. Lawrence, but seized every opportunity of distressing the English settlement of Nova Scotia. We have already observed, that the town of Halifax was no sooner built, than they spirited up the Indians of that neighbourhood to commit hostilities against the inhabitants, some of whom they murdered, and others they carried prisoners to Louisbourg, where they sold them for arms and ammunition, the French pretending that they maintained this traffic from motives of pure compassion, in order to prevent the massacre of the English captives, whom, however, they did not set at liberty without exacting an exorbitant ransom. As these skulking parties of Indians were generally directed and headed by French commanders, repeated complaints were made to the governor of Louisbourg, who still answered, that his jurisdiction did not extend over the

Indians, and that their French conductors were chosen from the inhabitants of Annapolis, who thought proper to remain in that country after it was ceded to the English, and were, in fact, the subjects of Great Britain. Even while the conferences were carried on for ascertaining the limits of Nova Scotia, the governor of Canada detached M. la Corne, with some regular troops, and a body of militia, to fortify a post on the bay of Chignecto, on pretence that this and a great part of the peninsula belonged to his government. The possession of this post not only secured to the Indians of the Continent a free entrance into the peninsula, and a safe retreat in case of pursuit; but also encouraged the French inhabitants of Annapolis to rise in open rebellion against the English government.

MAJOR LAURENCE DEFEATS THE FRENCH NEUTRALS.

In the spring of the year one thousand seven hundred and fifty, General Cornwallis, governor of Halifax, detached Major Laurence with a few men to reduce them to obedience. At his approach they burned their towns to ashes, forsook their possessions, and threw themselves under the protection of M. la Corne, who, thus reinforced, found himself at the head of fifteen hundred men, well provided with arms and ammunition. Major Laurence being unable to cope with him in the field, demanded an interview, at which he desired to know for what cause the French inhabitants of Nova Scotia had shaken off their allegiance to the crown of Great Britain, and violated the neutrality which they had hitherto affected to profess. The French officer, without pretending to account for their behaviour, gave him to understand, in general terms, that he had orders to defend his post, and these orders he was determined to obey. The English major finding himself too weak

to attack their united force, and having no orders to commit hostilities against any but the Indians and their open abettors, returned to Halifax, without having been able to fulfil the purpose of his expedition. Immediately after his retreat, the French neutrals (so they were called) returned to the habitations which they had abandoned; and, in conjunction with the Indians, renewed their depredations upon the inhabitants of Halifax, and its dependent settlements. The English governor, justly incensed at these outrages, and seeing they would neither submit to the English government themselves, nor allow others to enjoy it with tranquillity, resolved to expel them effectually from the country they so ill deserved to possess. Major Laurence was again detached with a thousand men, transported by sea to Chignecto, where he found the French and Indians entrenched, in order to dispute his landing. Notwithstanding this opposition, he made a descent with a few companies, received and returned a smart fire, and rushing into their entrenchments, obliged them to fly with the utmost precipitation, leaving a considerable number killed and wounded on the spot. The fugitives saved themselves by crossing a river, on the farther bank of which La Corne stood at the head of his troops, drawn up in order to receive them as friends and dependents. He had by this time erected a fort, which he denominated Beau Sejour; and now the English built another on the opposite side of the river, which was called after its founder St. Laurence. This being provided with a good garrison, served as a check upon the French, and in some measure restrained the incursions of their barbarians. Not that it effectually answered this purpose; for the Indians and neutrals still seized every opportunity of attacking the English in the interior parts of the peninsula. In the course of the succeeding year they surprised the little town of Dartmouth, on the other side of Halifax-bay, where

they killed and scalped a great number of people, and carried off some prisoners. For these expeditions the French always supplied them with boats, canoes, arms, and ammunition; and indeed they were conducted with such care and secrecy, that it was almost impossible to prevent their success. One sure remedy against the sudden and stolen incursions of those savages might have been found in the use of stanch hounds, which would have run upon the foot, detected the skulking parties of the Indians, and frustrated all their ambuscades; but this expedient, so easy and practicable, was never tried, though frequently recommended in public to the attention of the government, and the consideration of the colonists. The Indians continued to plunder and massacre the British subjects with impunity, and were countenanced by the French government in that country, who now strengthened their lodgment on the neck of the peninsula with an additional fort, distinguished by the name of Baye-verte; and built a third at the mouth of St. John's river, on the north side of the bay of Fundy.

BRITISH AMBASSADOR AT PARIS AMUSED WITH GENERAL PROMISES.

All these previous steps to a rupture with England were taken with great deliberation, while the commissaries of both nations were disputing about the limits of the very country which they thus arrogantly usurped; and they proceeded to perfect their chain of forts to the southward, without paying the least regard to the expostulations of the English governors, or to a memorial presented at Versailles by the Earl of Albemarle, the British minister. He demanded that express orders should be sent to M. de la Jonquiere, the commander for the French in America, to desist from violence against the British subjects in that country: that

the fort of Niagara should be immediately razed: that the subjects of Great Britain, who had been made prisoners, should be set at liberty, and indemnified for the losses they had sustained; and that the persons who had committed these excesses should be punished in an exemplary manner. True it is, six Englishmen, whom they had unjustly taken, were immediately dismissed; and the ambassador amused with general promises of sending such instructions to the French governor in America, as should anticipate any cause of complaint for the future; but, far from having any intention to perform these promises, the court of Versailles, without all doubt, exhorted La Jonquiere to proceed in bringing its ambitious schemes to perfection.

SESSION OPENED.

Every incident in America seemed to prognosticate war, when the session of Parliament was opened on the fifteenth day of November; yet his majesty, on this occasion, told them, that the events of the year had not made it necessary for him to offer any thing in particular to their consideration relating to foreign affairs. He even declared, that the continuance of the public tranquillity, and the general state of Europe, remained upon the same footing as when they last parted; and assured them of his steadiness in pursuing the most effectual measures to preserve to his people the blessings of peace. He expressed uncommon concern, that the horrid crimes of robbery and of murder were of late rather increased than diminished, and earnestly recommended this important object to their serious attention. Affectionate addresses were presented by both Houses in answer to this harangue; and, what was very remarkable, they were proposed and passed without question or debate.

The Commons continued the same number of sea-

men and land-forces for the ensuing year, which had been granted in the last session, and made suitable provision for all the exigencies of the state. The whole supply amounted to two millions seven hundred ninety-seven thousand nine hundred and sixteen pounds, ten shillings, and two-pence, to be raised by a land-tax of two shillings in the pound, a malt-tax, a continuation of certain duties on wine, vinegar, cider, and beer imported, a sum taken from the sinking-fund, and the overplus of certain grants, funds, and duties. The provisions made considerably exceeded the grants; but this excess was chargeable with the interest of what should be borrowed upon the credit in the land or malt-tax, there being a clause of credit in both, as also with the deficiency (if any should happen) in the sums they were computed to produce. The House agreed to all these resolutions almost unanimously; indeed, no opposition was made to any of them, but that for continuing the same number of land-forces, which was carried by a great majority.

REPEAL OF THE ACT FOR NATURALIZING JEWS.

The act permitting Jews to be naturalized, which had, during the last session, triumphed over such an obstinate opposition, was by this time become the subject of national horror and execration. Every part of the kingdom resounded with the reproach of the ministry who had enforced such an odious measure; and the two brothers, who engrossed the greater part of the administration, trembled at the prospect of what this clamour might produce at the general election, this being the last session of the present Parliament. So eager were the ministers to annul this unpopular measure, that, immediately after the Peers had agreed to the nature and form of an address to his majesty, the

Duke of Newcastle, with that precipitation so peculiar to his character, poured forth an abrupt harangue in that House, importing, that the disaffected had made a handle of the act passed last session in favour of the Jews, to raise discontents among many of his majesty's good subjects; and as the act was in itself of little importance, he was of opinion it ought to be repealed; for this purpose he presented a bill ready framed, which was read and committed, though not without some debate. The naturalization bill, now devoted as a sacrifice to the resentment of the people, contained a clause disabling all naturalized Jews from purchasing, inheriting, or receiving any advowson or presentation, or right to any ecclesiastical benefice or promotion, school, hospital, or donative; and by the first draft of the bill, which his grace now presented, it was intended that this clause should not be repealed. It was the opinion, however, of the majority, that such a clause standing unrepealed might imply that the Jews, by being thus expressly excluded from the possession of any ecclesiastical right of presentation, would be considered as having the power and privilege of purchasing and inheriting any lay property in the kingdom. On this consideration an amendment was made in the bill, the clause in question was left out, and the whole act of naturalization repealed without exception[k]. Though the Lords in general concurred in the expediency of the repeal, it was opposed by some few, as too great a sacrifice to the idle and unfounded clamours of the multitude; and upon this side of the debate a great power of elocution was displayed by Earl Temple, who had lately succeeded to this title on the death of his mother, a nobleman of distinguished abilities, and the

[k] The reverend bench of bishops had, with a laudable spirit of christian meekness and philanthropy, generally approved of the indulgence granted to their Hebrew brethren; and now they acquiesced in the proposed repeal with the same passive discretion, though one of the number contended for the saving clause which the Duke of N—— had recommended.

most amiable disposition, frank, liberal, humane, and zealously attached to the interest and honour of his country. In the Lower House, the members of both parties seemed to vie with each other in demonstrations of aversion to this unpopular act. On the very first day of the session, immediately after the motion for an address to his majesty, Sir James Dashwood, an eminent leader in the opposition, gave the Commons to understand, that he had a motion of very great importance to make, which would require the attention of every member, as soon as the motion for the address should be discussed; he therefore desired they would not quit the House, until he should have an opportunity to explain his proposal. Accordingly, they had no sooner agreed to the motion for an address of thanks to his majesty, than he stood up again; and having expatiated upon the just and general indignation which the act of the preceding session, in favour of the Jews, had raised among the people, he moved to order that the House should be called over on Tuesday the fourth day of December, for taking that act into consideration; but being given to understand, that it was not usual to appoint a call of the House for any particular purpose, he agreed that the motion should be general. It was seconded by Lord Parker, his opposite in political interests; the House agreed to it without opposition, and the call was ordered accordingly. They were anticipated, however, by the Lords, who framed and transmitted to them a bill on the same subject, to the purport of which the Commons made no objection; for every member, having the fear of the general election before his eyes, carefully avoided every expression which could give umbrage to his constituents; but violent opposition was made to the preamble, which ran in the following strain: "Whereas an act of Parliament was made and passed in the twenty-fifth year of his majesty's reign, entitled 'An Act to permit Persons pro-

fessing the Jewish Religion to be naturalized by Parliament, and for other Purposes therein mentioned;' and whereas occasion has been taken, from the said act, to raise discontents and disquiets in the minds of his majesty's subjects, be it enacted," &c. This introduction was considered as an unjust reflection upon the body of the people in general, and in particular upon those who had opposed the bill in the course of the preceding session. Sir Roger Newdigate therefore moved, that the expression should be varied to this effect: "Whereas great discontents and disquietudes had from the said act arisen." The consequence of this motion was an obstinate debate, in which it was supported by the Earl of Egmont, and divers other able orators; but Mr. Pelham and Mr. Pitt were numbered among its opponents. The question being put for the proposed alteration, it was of course carried in the negative: the bill, after the third reading, passed *nemine contradicente*, and in due time obtained the royal assent.

MOTION FOR REPEALING A FORMER ACT FAVOURABLE TO THE JEWS.

Even this concession of the ministry did not allay the resentment of the people, and their apprehensions of encroachment from the Jews. Another act still subsisted, by virtue of which any person professing the Jewish religion might become a free denizen of Great Britain, after having resided seven years in any of his majesty's colonies in America; and this was now considered as a law, having the same dangerous tendency, of which the other was now in a fair way of being convicted. It was moved, therefore, in the Lower House, that part of this former act might be read: then the same member made a motion for an address to his majesty, desiring that the House might have the perusal of the lists transmitted from the American colonies to

the commissioners for trade and plantations, containing the names of all such persons professing the Jewish religion as had entitled themselves to the benefit of the said act, since the year one thousand seven hundred and forty. These lists were accordingly presented, and left upon the table for the perusal of the members: but as this act contained no limitation of time within which the benefit of it should be claimed, and as this claim was attended with a good deal of trouble and some expense, very few persons had availed themselves of it in that period. Nevertheless, as a great number of Jews were already entitled to claim this indulgence, and as it remained an open channel through which Great Britain might be deluged with those people, all of whom the law would hold as natural-born subjects, and their progeny as freed from all the restrictions contained in the act with respect to naturalized foreigners, Lord Harley moved for leave to bring in a bill to repeal so much of the said act as related to persons professing the Jewish religion, who should come to settle in any British colony after a certain time. The motion was seconded by Sir James Dashwood, and supported by the Earl of Egmont; but being found unequal to the interest and elocution of Mr. Pelham and Mr. Pitt, was rejected by the majority.

EAST INDIA MUTINY BILL.

The next object that claimed the attention of the Commons was a bill for improving the regulations already made to prevent the spreading of a contagious distemper, which raged among the horned cattle in different parts of the kingdom. The last bill of this session that had the good fortune to succeed was brought in for punishing mutiny and desertion of officers and soldiers in the service of the East India company, and for the punishment of offences committed in the East

Indies and the island of St. Helena. This being a measure of a very extraordinary nature, all the members were ordered to attend the House on the day fixed for the second reading; at the same time all charters, commissions, and authorities, by which any powers relative to a military jurisdiction, or the exercise of martial law, had been granted or derived from the crown to the said company, were submitted to the perusal of the members. The bill was by many considered as a dangerous extension of military power, to the prejudice of the civil rights enjoyed by British subjects, and as such violently contested by the Earl of Egmont, Lord Strange, and Mr. Alderman Beckford. Their objections were answered by the solicitor-general and Mr. Yorke. The bill, after some warm debates, being espoused by the ministry, was enacted into a law, and despatched to the East Indies by the first opportunity.

Some other motions were made, and petitions presented on different subjects, which, as they miscarried, it will be unnecessary to particularize. It may not be amiss, however, to record an exemplary act of justice done by the Commons on a person belonging to a public office, whom they detected in the practice of fraud and imposition. Notwithstanding the particular care taken in the last session to prevent the monopolizing of tickets in the state lottery, all those precautions had been eluded in a scandalous manner by certain individuals intrusted with the charge of delivering the tickets to the contributors, according to the intent of the act, which expressly declared that not more than twenty should be sold to any one person. Instead of conforming to these directions of the legislature, they and their friends engrossed great numbers, sheltering themselves under a false list of feigned names for the purpose; by which means they not only defeated the equitable intention of the Commons, but in some measure injured the public credit; inasmuch as their avarice

had prompted them to subscribe for a greater number than they had cash to purchase, so that there was a deficiency in the first payment, which might have had a bad effect on the public affairs. These practices were so flagrant and notorious as to attract the notice of the Lower House, where an inquiry was begun, and prosecuted with a spirit of real patriotism, in opposition to a scandalous cabal, who endeavoured with equal eagerness and perseverance to screen the delinquents. All their efforts, however, proved abortive; and a committee, appointed to examine particulars, agreed to several severe resolutions against one Le ——, who had amassed a large fortune by this and other kinds of peculation. They voted him guilty of a breach of trust, and a direct violation of the lottery act; and an address was presented to his majesty, desiring he might be prosecuted by the attorney-general for these offences. He was accordingly sued in the court of King's Bench, and paid a fine of one thousand pounds, for having committed frauds by which he had gained forty times that sum; but he was treated with such gentleness as remarkably denoted the clemency of that tribunal.

SESSION CLOSED.

The session ended in the beginning of April, when the king gave the Parliament to understand that he should say nothing at present on foreign affairs; but assured them of his fixed resolution to exert his whole power in maintaining the general tranquillity, and adhering to such measures for that purpose as he had hitherto pursued in conjunction with his allies. He in very affectionate terms thanked both Houses for the repeated proofs they had given of their zealous attachment and loyalty to his person and government. He enumerated the salutary measures they had taken for lessening the national debt, and augmenting the public

credit, extending navigation and commerce, reforming the morals of the people, and improving the regulations of civil economy. He concluded with declaring, that he securely relied upon the loyalty and good affection of his people, and had no other aim than their permanent happiness. In a little time after the close of this session they were dissolved by proclamation, and new writs issued by the lord chancellor for convoking a new Parliament. The same ceremonies were practised with respect to the convocations of Canterbury and York; though they no longer retained their former importance; nor, indeed, were they suffered to sit and deliberate upon the subjects which formerly fell under their cognizance and discussion.

DEATH OF MR. PELHAM. CHANGE IN THE MINISTRY.

In the beginning of March, the ministry of Great Britain had been left without a head by the death of Mr. Pelham, which was not only sincerely lamented by his sovereign, but also regretted by the nation in general, to whose affection he had powerfully recommended himself by the candour and humanity of his conduct and character, even while he pursued measures which they did not entirely approve. The loss of such a minister was the more deeply felt by the government at this juncture, being the eve of a general election for a new Parliament, when every administration is supposed to exert itself with redoubled vigilance and circumspection. He had already concerted the measures for securing a majority, and his plan was faithfully executed by his friends and adherents, who still engrossed the administration. His brother, the Duke of Newcastle, was appointed first lord commissioner of the treasury, and succeeded as secretary of state by Sir Thomas Robinson, who had long resided as ambassador

at the court of Vienna. The other department of this office was still retained by the Earl of Holdernesse; and the function of chancellor of the exchequer was performed as usual by the lord chief justice of the King's Bench, until a proper person could be found to fill that important office; but in the course of the summer it was bestowed upon Mr. Legge, who acquitted himself with equal honour and capacity. Divers other alterations were made, of less importance to the public; Sir George Lyttelton was appointed cofferer, and the Earl of Hillsborough, comptroller of the household. Mr. George Grenville, brother to Earl Temple, became treasurer of the navy; and Mr. Charles Townshend, of whom we shall have occasion to speak in the sequel, took place as a commissioner at the board of Admiralty, in the room of Lord Barrington, made master of the wardrobe. Lord Hardwicke, the chancellor, was promoted to the dignity of an earl. The place of lord chief justice of the King's Bench becoming vacant by the death of Sir William Lee, was filled with Sir Dudley Rider, and he was succeeded by Mr. Murray in the office of attorney-general.

NEW PARLIAMENT ASSEMBLED AND PROROGUED.

The elections for the new Parliament generally succeeded according to the wish of the ministry; for opposition was now dwindled down to the lowest state of imbecility. It had received a mortal wound by the death of the late Prince of Wales, whose adherents were too wise to pursue an *ignis fatuus*, without any prospect of success or advantage. Some of them had prudently sung their palinodia to the ministry, and been gratified with profitable employments; while others, setting too great a price upon their own importance, kept aloof till the market was over, and were left to

pine in secret over their disappointed ambition. The maxims of toryism had been relinquished by many, as the barren principles of a losing game; the body of the people were conciliated to the established government; and the harmony that now, for the first time, subsisted among all the branches of the royal family, had a wonderful effect in acquiring a degree of popularity which they had never before enjoyed. The writs being returned, the new Parliament was opened on the last day of May, by the Duke of Cumberland, and some other Peers, who acted by virtue of a commission from his majesty. The Commons having chosen for their speaker the Right Hon. Arthur Onslow, who had honourably filled that high office in four preceding Parliaments, he was presented and approved by the commissioners. Then the lord high chancellor harangued both Houses, giving them to understand, that his majesty had indulged them with this early opportunity of coming together, in order to complete without loss of time certain parliamentary proceedings, which he judged would be for the satisfaction of his good subjects; but he did not think proper to lay before them any points of general business, reserving every thing of that nature to the usual time of their assembling in the winter. On the fifth day of June this short session was closed, and the Parliament prorogued by the lords commissioners.

DISPUTES IN THE IRISH PARLIAMENT.

In the beginning of this year violent disputes arose between the government and the House of Commons in Ireland, on the almost forgotten subjects of privilege and prerogative. The Commons conceived they had an undoubted right to apply the surplus of their revenue towards national purposes, without the consent of their sovereign; and, accordingly, in the year one thousand

seven hundred and forty-nine, prepared a bill with this preamble: "Whereas on the twenty-fifth day of March last a considerable balance remained in the hands of the vice-treasurers or receivers-general of the kingdom, or their deputy or deputies, unapplied; and it will be for your majesty's service, and for the ease of your faithful subjects in this kingdom, that so much thereof as can be conveniently spared should be paid, agreeably to your majesty's most gracious intentions, in discharge of part of the national debt." This appropriation gave great offence to the advocates for prerogative in England, who affirmed that the Commons had no right to apply any part of the unappropriated revenue, or even to take any such affair into consideration, without the previous consent of the crown, expressed in the most explicit terms. It was in consequence of this doctrine that the Duke of Dorset, lord lieutenant of Ireland, told them in the next session of Parliament, held in the year one thousand seven hundred and fifty-one, he was commanded by the king to acquaint them, that his majesty, ever attentive to the ease and happiness of his subjects, would graciously consent and recommend it to them, that such a part of the money then remaining in his treasury, as should be thought consistent with the public service, be applied towards the further reduction of the national debt. This declaration alarmed the Commons, zealous as they were for the preservation of their privileges; and in their address of thanks, which, like that of the Parliament of Great Britain, used always to echo back the words of the speech, they made no mention of his majesty's consent; but only acknowledged his gracious attention to their ease and happiness, in recommending to them the application of the surplus. They accordingly resolved to apply one hundred and twenty thousand pounds of that overplus towards the discharge of the national debt; and, in the preamble of the bill, framed for this purpose, made no mention of

his majesty's consent, though before they had acknowledged his goodness in recommending this application. The ministry in England were highly offended at this purposed omission, which they construed into a wilful encroachment on the prerogative; and the bill was sent back with an alteration in the preamble, signifying his majesty's consent as well as recommendation. The Irish House of Commons being at that time deeply engaged in a minute inquiry into the conduct of a gentleman, a servant of the crown, and a member of their own House, accused of having misapplied a large sum of money, with which he had been intrusted for rebuilding or repairing the barracks, were now unwilling to embroil themselves farther with the government, until this affair should be discussed. They, therefore, passed the bill with the alteration, and proceeded with their inquiry. The person was convicted of having misapplied the public money, and ordered to make the barracks fit for the reception and accommodation of the troops at his own expense. They did not, however, neglect to assert what they thought their rights and privileges, when the next opportunity occurred. The Duke of Dorset, when he opened the session of this year, repeated the expression of his majesty's gracious consent, in mentioning the surplus of the public money. They again omitted that word in their address; and resolved, in their bill of application, not only to sink this odious term, but likewise to abate in their complaisance to the crown, by leaving out that expression of grateful acknowledgment, which had met with such a cold reception above. By this time the contest had kindled up two violent factions, and diffused a general spirit of resentment through the whole Irish nation. The committee who prepared the bill, instead of inserting the usual compliments in the preamble, mentioned nothing but a recital of facts, and sent it over in a very plain dress, quite destitute of all embroidery.

The ministry, intent upon vindicating the prerogative from such an unmannerly attack, filled up the omissions of the committee, and sent it back with this alteration: "And your majesty, ever attentive to the ease and happiness of your faithful subjects, has been graciously pleased to signify that you would consent, and to recommend it to us, that so much of the money remaining in your majesty's treasury as should be necessary to be applied to the discharge of the national debt, or such part thereof as should be thought expedient by Parliament." This then being the crisis which was to determine a constitutional point of such importance, namely, whether the people in Parliament assembled have a right to deliberate upon and vote the application of any part of the unappropriated revenue, without the previous consent of the crown; those who were the most zealously attached to the liberties of their country resolved to exert themselves in opposing what they conceived to be a violation of those liberties; and the bill, with its alterations, was rejected by a majority of five voices. The success of their endeavours was celebrated with the most extravagant rejoicings, as a triumph of patriotism over the arts of ministerial corruption; and, on the other hand, all the servants of the crown, who had joined the popular cry on this occasion, were in a little time dismissed from their employments. The rejection of the bill was a great disappointment to the creditors of the public, and the circulation of cash was almost stagnated. These calamities were imputed to arbitrary designs in the government; and the people began to be inflamed with an enthusiastic spirit of independency, which might have produced mischievous effects, had not artful steps been taken to bring over the demagogues, and thus divert the stream of popular clamour from the ministry to those very individuals who had been the idols of popular veneration. The speaker of the House of Commons was promoted to the dignity

of an earl; and some other patriots were gratified with lucrative employments. His majesty's letter arrived for paying off seventy-five thousand five hundred pounds of the national debt. The circulation was thus animated, and the resentment of the populace subsiding, the kingdom retrieved its former tranquillity.

TRANSACTIONS IN THE EAST INDIES.

The ambition and intrigues of the French court, by which the British interest was invaded and disturbed on the Continent of America, had also extended itself to the East Indies, where they endeavoured to embroil the English company with divers nabobs, or princes, who governed different parts of the peninsula intrà Gangem. That the reader may have a clear and distinct idea of these transactions, we shall exhibit a short sketch of the English forts and settlements in that remote country. The first of these we shall mention is Surat[1], in the province so called, situated between the twenty-first and twenty-second degrees of north latitude; from hence the peninsula stretches into the Indian ocean as far as the latitude of eight north, ending in a point at Cape Comorin, which is the southern extremity. To the northward this peninsula joins to Indostan, and at its greatest breadth extends seven hundred miles. Upon the west, east, and south, it is washed by the sea. It comprehends the kingdoms of Malabar, Decan, Golconda, and Bisnagar, with the principalities of Gingi, Tanjour, and Madura. The western side is distinguished by the name of the Malabar coast: the eastern takes the denomination of Coromandel; and, in different parts of this long sweep, from Surat round Cape Comorin to the bottom of the bay of Bengal, the English and other European powers have, with the consent of the

[1] See note [E], vol. vi.

mogul, established forts and trading settlements. All these kingdoms, properly speaking, belong to the mogul; but his power was so weakened by the last invasion of Kouli Khan, that he has not been able to assert his empire over this remote country; the tributary princes of which, and even the nabobs, who were originally governors appointed under their authority, have rendered themselves independent, and exert an absolute dominion over their respective territories, without acknowledging his superiority either by tribute or homage. These princes, when they quarrel among themselves, naturally have recourse to the assistance of such European powers as are settled in or near their dominions; and in the same manner the East Indian companies of the European powers, which happen to be at war with each other, never fail to interest the nabobs in the dispute.

ACCOUNT OF THE ENGLISH SETTLEMENTS ON THE MALABAR AND COROMANDEL COAST.

The next English settlement to Surat, on the coast of the peninsula, is Bombay, in the kingdom of Decan, a small island, with a very convenient harbour, about five-and-forty leagues to the south of Surat. The town is very populous; but the soil is barren, and the climate unhealthy; and the commerce was rendered very precarious by the neighbourhood of the famous corsair Angria, until his port of Geriah was taken, and his fortifications demolished. The English company likewise carry on some traffic at Dabul, about forty leagues farther to the south, in the province of Cuncan. In the same southerly progression, towards the point of the peninsula, we arrive at Carwar, in the latitude of fifteen degrees, where there is a small fort and factory belonging to the company, standing on the south side

of a bay, with a river capable of receiving ships of pretty large burthen. The climate here is remarkably salubrious: the country abounds with provisions of all sorts, and the best pepper of India grows in this neighbourhood. The next English settlement we find at Tillicherry, where the company has erected a fort, to defend their commerce of pepper and cardamoms from the insults of the rajah, who governs this part of Malabar. Hither the English trade was removed from Calicut, a large town that stands fifteen leagues to the southward of Tillicherry, and was as well frequented as any port on the coast of the Indian peninsula. The most southerly settlement which the English possess on the Malabar coast is that of Anjengo, between the eighth and ninth degrees of latitude. It is defended by a regular fort, situated on a broad river, which falls into the sea, and would be very commodious for trade, were not the water on the bar too shallow to admit ships of considerable burthen. Then turning the Cape, and passing through the strait of Chilao, formed by the island of Ceylon, we arrive on the coast of Coromandel, which forms the eastern side of the isthmus. Prosecuting our course in a northern direction, the first English factory we reach is that of Fort St. David's, formerly called Tegapatan, situated in the latitude of eleven degrees forty minutes north, within the kingdom of Gingi. It was, about six-and-twenty years ago, sold by a Mahratta prince to the East India company, and, next to Bombay, is the most considerable settlement we have yet mentioned. Its territory extends about eight miles along the coast, and half that space up the country, which is delightfully watered by a variety of rivers: the soil is fertile, and the climate healthy. The fort is regular, well provided with cannon, ammunition, and a numerous garrison, which is the more necessary, on account of the neighbourhood of the French settle-

ment at Pondicherry[m]. But the chief settlement belonging to the company on this coast is that of Madras, or Fort St. George, standing farther to the northward, between the thirteenth and fourteenth degrees of latitude, and not a great way from the diamond mines of Golconda. It is seated on a flat, barren, scorching sand, so near the sea, that in bad weather the walls are endangered by the mighty surges rolled in from the ocean. As the soil is barren, the climate is so intensely hot, that it would be altogether uninhabitable, were not the heat mitigated by the sea-breezes. On the land side it is defended by a salt water river, which, while it contributes to the security of the place, robs the inhabitants of one great comfort, by obstructing the springs of fresh water. The fort is a regular square, the town surrounded with walls well mounted with artillery, and the place, including the Black Town, is very populous. Madras, with several villages in the neighbourhood, was purchased of the King of Golconda, before the mogul became sovereign of this country. The governor of this place is not only president of Fort St. George, but also of all the other settlements on the coasts of Malabar and Coromandel, as far as the island of Sumatra. He lives in great pomp, having inferior judges, who pass sentence of death occasionally on malefactors of any nation, except the subjects of Great Britain. All the company's affairs are directed by him and his council, who are invested with the power of inflicting corporal punishment, short of life and member, upon such Europeans as are in the service, and dispose of all places of trust and profit. By virtue of an act passed in the course of this very session, the military officers belonging to the company were permitted to hold courts-martial, and punish their soldiers according to the degree of their delinquency. In a word, Madras is of the utmost

[m] The trade consists of long cloths of different colours, sallampores, moreés, dimities, ginghams, and succatoons.

importance to the company for its strength, wealth, and the great returns it makes in calicoes and muslins. Towards the latter end of the last century the English company had a flourishing factory at Masulipatam, standing on the north side of the river Nagundi, which separates the provinces of Golconda and Bisnagar, in the latitude of sixteen degrees and thirty minutes; but now there is no European settlement here, except a Dutch factory, maintained for carrying on the chintz commerce. At Visgapatam, situated still farther to the northward, the English possess a factory, regularly fortified, on the side of a river, which, however, a dangerous bar has rendered unfit for navigation. The adjacent country affords cotton cloths, and the best striped muslins of India. It is chiefly for the use of this settlement that the company maintains a factory at Ganjam, the most eastern town in the province or kingdom of Golconda, situated in a country abounding with rice and sugar canes. Still farther to the north coast, in the latitude of twenty-two degrees, the company maintains a factory at Balasore, which was formerly very considerable; but hath been of very little consequence since the navigation of the river Huguely was improved. At this place every European ship bound for Bengal and the Ganges takes in a pilot. The climate is not counted very salubrious; but the adjacent country is fruitful to admiration, and here are considerable manufactures of cotton and silk. Without skilful pilots, the English would find it very difficult to navigate the different channels through which the river Ganges discharges itself into the sea at the bottom of the bay of Bengal. On the southern branch is a town called Pipely, where there was formerly an English factory; but this was removed to Huguely, one hundred and sixty miles farther up the river; a place which, together with the company's settlement at Calcutta, were the emporiums of their commerce for the whole king-

dom of Bengal. Indeed Huguely is now abandoned by the English, and their whole trade centres at Calcutta or Fort William, which is a regular fortification, containing lodgings for the factors and writers, storehouses for the company's merchandise, and magazines for their ammunition. As for the governor's house, which likewise stands within the fort, it is one of the most regular structures in all India. Besides these settlements along the sea-coast of the peninsula, and on the banks of the Ganges, the English East India company possess certain inland factories and posts for the convenience and defence of their commerce, either purchased of the nabobs and rajahs, or conquered in the course of the war. As the operations we propose to record were confined to the coasts of Malabar and Coromandel, or the interior countries which form the peninsula intrà Gangem, it will be unnecessary to describe the factory at Bencoolen, on the island of Sumatra, or any settlement which the English possess in other parts of the East Indies.

DISPUTE ABOUT THE GOVERNMENT OF ARCOT.

In order to understand the military transactions of the English company in India, the reader will take notice, that immediately after the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, Monsieur Dupleix, who commanded for the French in that country, began by his intrigues to sow the seeds of dissension among the nabobs, that he might be the better able to fish in troubled waters. Nizam Almuluck, the mogul's viceroy of Decan, having the right of nominating a governor of the Carnatic, now more generally known by the name of the Nabob of Arcot, appointed Anaverdy Khan to that office in the year one thousand seven hundred and forty-five. The viceroy dying was succeeded in his viceroyalty, or suba-

ship, by his second son Nazirzing, whom the mogul confirmed. He was opposed in his pretensions by his own cousin Muzapherzing, who had recourse to the assistance of M. Dupleix, and obtained from him a reinforcement of Europeans and artillery, in consideration of many presents and promises which he fulfilled in the sequel. Thus reinforced and joined by one Chunda Saib, an active Indian chief, he took the field against his kinsman Nazirzing, who was supported by a body of English troops under Colonel Laurence. The French, dreading an engagement, retired in the night; and Muzapherzing, seeing himself abandoned by all his own troops, appealed to the clemency of his cousin, who spared his life, but detained him as a state prisoner. In this situation he formed a conspiracy against his kinsman's life with Nazirzing's prime minister, and the Nabobs of Cadupab and Condaneor, then in his camp; and the conspirators were encouraged in their scheme by Dupleix and Chunda Saib, who had retired to Pondicherry. Thus stimulated, they murdered Nazirzing in his camp, and proclaimed Muzapherzing Viceroy of Decan. In the tents of the murdered viceroy they found an immense treasure, of which a great share fell to M. Dupleix, whom Muzapherzing the usurper at this time associated in the government. By virtue of this association the Frenchman assumed the state and formalities of an eastern prince; and he and his colleague Muzapherzing appointed Chunda Saib Nabob of Arcot; Anaverdy Khan, the late nabob, had been, in the year one thousand seven hundred and forty-nine, defeated and slain by Muzapherzing and Chunda Saib, with the assistance of their French auxiliaries; and his son Mahommed Ali Khan had put himself under the protection of the English at Madras, and was confirmed by Nazirzing, as his father's successor in the nabobship, or government of Arcot. This government, therefore, was disputed between Mahommed Ali Khan, appointed

by the legal Viceroy Nazirzing, supported by the English company, and Chunda Saib, nominated by the usurper Muzapherzing, and protected by Dupleix, who commanded at Pondicherry. Muzapherzing did not long survive his usurpation. In the year one thousand seven hundred and fifty-one, the same nabobs who had promoted him to his kinsman's place, thinking themselves ill rewarded for their services, fell upon him suddenly, routed his troops, and put him to death; and next day the chiefs of the army proclaimed Sallabatzing, brother to Nazirzing, Viceroy of Decan: on the other hand, the mogul appointed Gauzedy Khan, who was the elder brother of Sallabatzing; and this prince confirmed Mahommed Ali Khan in the government of Arcot: but the affairs of the mogul's court were then in such confusion, that he could not spare an army to support the nomination he had made. Chunda Saib, Nabob of Arcot, having been deposed by the great mogul, who placed Anaverdy Khan in his room, he resolved to recover his government by force, and had recourse to the French general at Pondicherry, who reinforced him with two thousand sepoys, or soldiers of the country, sixty caffrees, and four hundred and twenty French troops, on condition that, if he proved successful in his enterprise, he should cede to the French the town of Velur, in the neighbourhood of Pondicherry, with its dependencies, consisting of forty-five villages. Thus reinforced, he defeated his rival Anaverdy Khan, who lost his life in the engagement, reassumed the government of Arcot, and punctually performed the conditions which had been stipulated by his French allies.

MAHOMMED ALI KHAN SUPPORTED BY THE ENGLISH.

Mahommed Ali Khan, at the death of his father, had fled to Tiruchirapalli[n], and solicited the assistance of the English, who favoured him with a reinforcement of money, men, and ammunition, under the conduct of Major Laurence, a brave and experienced officer. By dint of this supply he gained some advantages over the enemy, who were obliged to retreat; but no decisive blow was given. Mahommed afterwards repaired in person to Fort St. David's to demand more powerful succours, alleging that his fate was connected with the interest of the English company, which in time would be obliged to abandon the whole coast, should they allow the enemy to proceed in their conquests. In consequence of these representations, he received another strong reinforcement under the command of Captain Cope; but nothing of importance was attempted, and the English auxiliaries retired. Then Mahommed was attacked by the enemy, who obtained a complete victory over him. Finding it impossible to maintain his footing by his own strength, he entered into a close alliance with the English, and ceded to them some commercial points, which had been long in dispute. Then they detached Captain Cope to put Tiruchirapalli in a posture of defence; while Captain de Gingins, a Swiss officer, marched at the head of four hundred Europeans to the nabob's assistance. The two armies being pretty equal in strength, lay encamped in sight of each other a whole month; during which nothing happened but a few skirmishes, which generally terminated to the advantage

[n] Tiruchirapalli, commonly called Trichinopoly, situated near the river Cauveri, above two hundred miles to the southward of Madras, is the capital of a small kingdom belonging to the government of Arcot, and bounded on the east by the kingdom of Tanjore.

of the English auxiliaries. In order to make a diversion, and divide the French forces, the company resolved to send a detachment into the province of Arcot; and this was one of the first occasions upon which the extraordinary talents of Mr. Clive were displayed. He had entered into the service of the East India company as a writer, and was considered as a person very indifferently qualified for succeeding in any civil station of life. He now offered his service in a military capacity, and actually began his march to Arcot, at the head of two hundred and ten Europeans, with five hundred sepoys[o].

MR. CLIVE TAKES ARCOT.

Such was the resolution, secrecy, and despatch with which he conducted this enterprise, that the enemy knew nothing of his motions until he was in possession of the capital, which he took without opposition. The inhabitants, expecting to be plundered, offered him a large sum to spare their city; but they derived their security from the generosity and discretion of the conqueror. He refused the proffered ransom, and issued a proclamation, intimating, that those who were willing to remain in their houses should be protected from insult and injury, and the rest have leave to retire with all their effects except provisions, for which he promised to pay the full value. By this sage conduct he conciliated the affections of the people so entirely, that even those who quitted the place supplied him with exact intelligence of the enemy's designs, when he was besieged in the sequel. The town was in a little time invested by Rajah Saib, son of Chunda Saib, at the head of a numerous army, and the operations of the siege were conducted by European engineers. Though their ap-

[o] The sepoys are the mercenaries of the country, who are hired as soldiers occasionally by all parties.

proaches were retarded by the repeated and resolute sallies of Mr. Clive, they at length effected two breaches supposed to be practicable; and on the fourteenth day of October, in the year one thousand seven hundred and fifty-one, gave a general assault. Mr. Clive, having received intimation of their design, had made such preparations for their reception, that they were repulsed in every quarter with great loss, and obliged to raise the siege with the utmost precipitation.

This gallant Englishman, not contented with the reputation he had acquired from his noble defence, was no sooner reinforced by a detachment under Captain Kirkpatrick, from Trichinopoly, than he marched in pursuit of the enemy, whom he overtook in the plains of Arani. There, on the third day of December, he attacked them with irresistible impetuosity; and after an obstinate dispute, obtained a complete victory at a very small expense. The forts of Timery, Caujeveram, and Aranie, surrendered to the terror of his name, rather than to the force of his arms; and he returned to Fort St. David's in triumph. He had enjoyed a very few weeks of repose, when he was summoned to the field by fresh incursions of the enemy. In the beginning of the year one thousand seven hundred and fifty-two, he marched with a small detachment to Madras, where he was joined by a reinforcement from Bengal, the whole number not exceeding three hundred Europeans, and assembled a body of the natives, that he might have at least the appearance of an army. With these he proceeded to Koveripauk, about fifteen miles from Arcot, where he found the French and Indians, consisting of fifteen hundred sepoys, seventeen hundred horse, a body of natives, and one hundred and fifty Europeans, with eight pieces of cannon. Though they were advantageously posted and intrenched, and the day was already far advanced, Mr. Clive advanced against them with his usual intrepidity; but the victory remained for some time in suspense. It

was now dark, and the battle doubtful, when Mr. Clive sent round a detachment to fall in the rear of the French battery. This attack was executed with great resolution, while the English in front entered the intrenchments with their bayonets fixed; and though very little tinctured with discipline, displayed the spirit and activity of hardy veterans. This double attack disconcerted the enemy in such a manner, that they soon desisted from all opposition. A considerable carnage ensued; yet the greater part of the enemy, both horse and foot, saved themselves by flight, under cover of the darkness. The French, to a man, threw down their arms, and surrendered themselves prisoners of war; and all the cannon and baggage fell into the hands of the victor.

CLIVE REDUCES THREE FORTS, AND TAKES M. D'ANTEUIL.

The province of Arcot being thus cleared of the enemy, Mr. Clive with his forces returned to Fort St. David's, where he found Major Laurence just arrived from England [p], to take upon him the command of the troops in the company's service. On the eighteenth day of March this officer, accompanied by Mr. Clive, took the field, and was joined by Captain de Gingins at Tiruchirapalli. From hence he detached Mr. Clive with four hundred European soldiers, a few Mahratta horse, and a body of sepoys, to cut off the enemy's retreat to Pondicherry. In the course of this expedition he dislodged a strong body of the foe posted at Samiaveram, and obliged Chunda Saib to throw a body of troops into a strong fortified temple, or pagoda, upon the river Koleroon, which was immediately invested. The commanding officer, in attempting to escape, was slain with some others, and the rest surrendered at dis-

[p] Major Laurence had sailed for England in the year 1750.

cretion. They were still in possession of another fortified temple, which he also besieged in form, and reduced by capitulation. Having subdued these forts, he marched directly to Volconda, whither he understood the French commander D'Anteuil had retired. He found that officer intrenched in a village, from whence he drove him with precipitation, and made himself master of the French cannon. The enemy attempted to save themselves in the neighbouring fort; but the gates being shut against them by the governor, who was apprehensive that they would be followed pell-mell by the English, Mr. Clive attacked them with great fury, and made a considerable slaughter; but his humanity being shocked at this carnage, he sent a flag of truce to the vanquished, with terms of capitulation, which they readily embraced. These articles imported, that D'Anteuil, and three other officers, should remain prisoners on parole for one year, that the garrison should be exchanged, and the money and stores be delivered to the nabob whom the English supported.

CHUNDA SAIB TAKEN AND PUT TO DEATH, AND HIS ARMY ROUTED.

During these transactions Chunda Saib lay encamped with an army of thirty thousand men at Syrinham, an island in the neighbourhood of Tiruchirapalli, which he longed eagerly to possess. Hither Major Laurence marched with his Indian allies[q], and took his measures so well, that the enemy's provisions were entirely intercepted. Chunda Saib, in attempting to fly, was taken prisoner by the Nabob of Tanjore, an ally of the English company, who ordered his head to be

[q] His army consisted of twelve hundred Europeans and Topasses in battalions, two thousand sepoys, with the forces of the nabob, the Kings of Tanjore, Muissack, and the Mahrattas, amounting to fifteen hundred horse and ten thousand infantry. Topasses are descendants from the Portuguese. The Mahrattas are native Indians of a very numerous and powerful nation, which hath more than once given law to the mogul.

struck off, in order to prevent the disputes which otherwise would have arisen among the captors[r]. The main body of the army being attacked by Major Laurence, and totally defeated, the island of Syrinham was surrendered, and about a thousand European French soldiers, under the command of Mr. Law, nephew to the famous Law who schemed the Mississippi company, fell into the hands of the conquerors, including thirty officers, with forty pieces of cannon, and ten mortars. M. Dupleix, though exceedingly mortified by this disaster, resolved to maintain the cause which he had espoused. He proclaimed Rajah Saib, the son of Chunda Saib, nabob of Arcot; and afterwards pretended that he himself had received from the mogul sanids or commissions, appointing him governor of all the Carnatic, from the river Kristnah to the sea; but these sanids appeared in the sequel to be forged. In order to complete the comedy, a supposed messenger from Delhi was received at Pondicherry as ambassador from the mogul. Dupleix, mounted on an elephant, preceded by music and dancing women, in the oriental manner, received in public his commission from the hands of the pretended ambassador. He affected the eastern state, kept his darbar or court, where he appeared sitting cross-legged on a sopha, and received presents as prince of the country from his own council, as well as from the natives. In the mean time, hostilities continued between the forces of the two companies, as auxiliaries to the contending nabobs. The English, under Major Kinnier, made an unsuccessful attempt upon Ginge, a strong town situated to the west of Pondicherry. Major Laurence defeated a strong body of French and natives, commanded by Dupleix's nephew, M. de Kerjean, in

[r] Chunda Saib demanded leave of the Tanjore general to pass through his camp to Tanjore, and this request was granted; but instead of being allowed to pass, he was detained prisoner, and as the allies could not agree about the manner in which he should be disposed of, some of the Tanjore officers, of their own accord, ended the dispute by cutting off his head.

the neighbourhood of Pondicherry, and took him prisoner, together with fifteen officers: after this success, Mr. Clive reduced the forts of Covelong and Chengalput, the last very strong, situated about forty miles to the southward of Madras. On the other hand, M. Dupleix intercepted at sea Captain Schaub, with his whole Swiss company, whom he detained prisoners at Pondicherry, although the two nations were not at war with each other. During these transactions Sallabatzing, with a body of French under M. de Bussy, advanced towards Aurengabad, which was the seat of government; but he was opposed by a chief of the Mahrattas, at the head of a numerous army. In the mean time Gauzedy Khan, the elder brother of Sallabatzing, whom the mogul had appointed Viceroy of Decan, took possession of his government at Aurengabad, where, in fourteen days after his arrival, he was poisoned by his own sister. The mogul immediately appointed his son Schah Abadin Khan to succeed his father; and this prince actually raised an army to come and take possession; but the mogul's affairs requiring his presence at Delhi, he was obliged to postpone his design, so that Sallabatzing was left without a competitor, and made a present to the French of all the English settlements to the northward. Thus concluded the year one thousand seven hundred and fifty-two. Next campaign was chiefly confined to the neighbourhood of Trichinopoly, where Major Laurence made several vigorous attacks upon the enemy's army, and obtained many advantages, which, however, did not prove decisive, because he was so much outnumbered that he could never follow his blow.

CONVENTION BETWEEN THE EAST INDIA COMPANIES OF ENGLAND AND FRANCE.

In the course of this year the mogul was deposed by his general, Schah Abadin Khan, the Viceroy of Decan,

who raised to the throne Allum Geer, another prince of the blood. In the succeeding year, a negotiation was set on foot by Mr. Saunders, Governor of Madras, and M. Dupleix; and conferences were opened at Sadrass, a Dutch settlement between Pondicherry and Fort St. George; but this proved abortive; and many other gallant efforts were made by Major Laurence in the territory of Trichinopoly, which still continued to be the scene of action. In the course of this year Admiral Watson arrived on the coast of Coromandel with a squadron of ships of war, having on board a regiment commanded by Colonel Aldercroon: at the same time the ships from France brought over to Pondicherry the Sieur Godeheu, commissary-general and governor-general of all their settlements, at whose arrival Dupleix departed for Europe. The new governor immediately wrote a letter to Mr. Saunders, professing the most pacific inclinations, and proposing a suspension of arms between the two companies until their disputes could be amicably adjusted. This proposal was very agreeable to the governor and council at Madras, and a cessation of arms actually took place in the month of October, in the year one thousand seven hundred and fifty-four. Deputies being sent to Pondicherry, a provisional treaty and truce were concluded, on condition that neither of the two companies should for the future interfere in any difference that might arise between the princes of the country. The other articles related to the places and settlements that should be retained or possessed by the respective companies, until fresh orders relating to this agreement should arrive from the courts of London and Versailles, transmitted by the two East India companies of France and England. Until such orders should arrive, it was stipulated that neither nation should be allowed to procure any new grant or cession, or to build forts for the defence of new establishments; and that they should not proceed to any

cession, retrocession, or evacuation of what they then possessed; but every thing should remain on the footing of *uti possidetis*. How pacific soever the sentiments of the French subjects might have been at this period in the East Indies, certain it is, the designs of the French governors in America were altogether hostile, and their conduct hastening towards a rupture, which kindled up a bloody war in every division of the globe.

GENERAL VIEW OF THE BRITISH COLONIES IN NORTH AMERICA.

As this war may be termed a native of America, and the principal scenes of it were acted on that Continent, we shall, for the information of the reader, sketch out the situation of the then British colonies as they bordered on each other, and extended along the sea-coast, from the gulf of St. Lawrence as far south as the country of Florida. We shall enumerate the Indian nations that lie scattered about their confines, and delineate the manner in which the French hemmed them in by a surprising line of fortifications. Should we comprehend Hudson's Bay, with the adjacent countries, and the banks of Newfoundland, in this geographical detail, we might affirm that Great Britain at that time possessed a territory along the sea-coast, extending seventeen hundred miles in a direct line, from the sixtieth to the thirty-first degree of northern latitude; but as these two countries were not concerned in this dispute, we shall advance from the northward to the southern side of the gulf of St. Lawrence; and, beginning with Acadia or Nova Scotia, describe our settlements as they lie in a southerly direction, as far as the gulf of Florida. This great tract of country, stretching fifteen degrees of latitude, is washed on the east by the Atlantic Ocean: the southern boundary is Spanish Florida; but to the westward the limits are uncertain, some affirming that

the jurisdiction of the colonies penetrates through the whole Continent, as far as the South Sea; while others, with more moderation, think they are naturally bounded by the river Illionois that runs into the Mississippi, and in a manner connects that river with the chain of lakes known by the names of Michigan, Huron, Erie, and Ontario, the three first communicating with each other, and the last discharging itself into the river St. Lawrence, which running by Montreal and Quebec issues into the bay of the same denomination, forming the northern boundary of Nova Scotia. The French, who had no legal claim to any lands on the south side of this river, nevertheless, with an insolence of ambition peculiar to themselves, not only extended their forts from the source of the St. Lawrence, through an immense tract of that country, as far as the Mississippi, which disembogues itself into the gulf of Florida; but also by a series of unparalleled encroachments, endeavoured to contract the English colonies within such narrow limits as would have cut off almost one half of their possessions. As we have already given a geographical description of Nova Scotia, and mentioned the particulars of the new settlement of Halifax, we shall now only observe, that it is surrounded on three sides by the sea, the gulf, and river of St. Lawrence; that its original boundary to the west was the river Pentagoet; but it is now contracted within the river St. Croix, because the crown of Great Britain did, in the year one thousand six hundred and sixty-three, grant to the Duke of York the territory of Sagadahack, stretching from St. Croix to the river of this name; which was in the sequel, by an express charter from the crown, annexed to the province of Massachusett's-bay, one of the four governments of New England. This country, situated next to Nova Scotia, lies between the forty-first and forty-fifth degrees of north latitude, extending near three hundred miles in length, and

about two hundred in breadth, if we bound it by those tracts which the French possessed; no part of the settlements of this country, however, stretches above sixty miles from the sea. The summer is here intensely hot, and the winter proportionably severe; nevertheless, the climate is healthy, and the sky generally serene. The soil is not favourable to any of the European kinds of grain, but produces great plenty of maize, which the people bake into bread, and brew into beer, though their favourite drink is made of molasses hopped, and impregnated with the tops of the spruce-fir, which is a native of this country. The ground raises good flax and tolerable hemp. Here are great herds of black cattle, some of them very large in size, a vast number of excellent hogs, a breed of small horses, graceful, swift, and hardy, and large flocks of sheep, whose wool, though not so fine as that of England, is manufactured with great success.

New England is composed of the four provinces known by the names of New Hampshire, Massachusett's-bay, Rhode-island, and Connecticut. It is bounded on the south by New York, extending northerly on both sides of the river Hudson, about two hundred miles into the country possessed by the Indians of the Five Nations, whom the French distinguish by the name of the Irroquois; but in breadth this province does not exceed fifty miles, though it comprehends Long-island, lying to the southward of Connecticut. The capital, which derives from the province the name of New York, is situated on an excellent harbour in the island of Manahatton, extending fourteen miles in length, and five in breadth, at the mouth of the noble river Hudson, which is navigable for above two hundred miles. At the distance of one hundred and fifty miles from New York stands the town of Albany, upon the same river. In this place all the treaties and other transactions were negotiated between the English and

the Irroquois, a confederacy of five Indian nations, who, by their union, courage, and military skill, had reduced a great number of other Indian tribes, and subdued a territory more extensive than the whole kingdom of France. They were about fourscore years ago able to bring ten thousand warriors into the field; but now their number is so greatly diminished by wars, epidemical diseases, and the use of spirituous liquors, that they cannot raise above fifteen hundred men, even though they have admitted into their confederacy the nation of the Tuscaroras, whom the English drove from the confines of Carolina. The Mohock Indians inhabit the country advanced from Albany. The northern extremities of New Hampshire and New York are divided by the lakes Champlain and Sacrament, between which the French had raised the fort of Crown Point.

Contiguous to New York, and lying along the coast, in a southerly direction, is the small province of New Jersey, bounded on the west by the river Delaware, which divides it from Pennsylvania, extending about one hundred and fifty miles in length, but in breadth not more than one-third of that extent. The climate, soil, and produce of these two provinces, as well as of Pennsylvania, are similar. They yield great quantities of grain, sheep, horses, hogs, and horned cattle; all kinds of poultry and game in great abundance; vegetables of every sort in perfection, and excellent fruit, particularly peaches and melons. Their vast forests abound with oak, ash, beech, chestnut, cedar, walnut-tree, cypress, hickery, sassafras, and pine; but the timber is not counted so fit for shipping as that of New England and Nova Scotia. These provinces produce great quantities of flax and hemp. New York affords mines of iron, and very rich copper ore is found in New Jersey.

Pennsylvania, lying to the southward of New York

and New Jersey, is bounded on the other side by Maryland, stretching two hundred and fifty miles in length, two hundred in breadth, and having no communication with the sea, except by the mouth of the river Delaware. This province was originally settled by Quakers, under the auspices of the celebrated William Penn, whose descendants are still proprietaries of the country. Philadelphia, the capital, stands on a tongue of land, at the confluence of the two navigable rivers, the Delaware and the Sculkel, disposed in the form of a regular oblong, and designed by the original plan to extend from the one to the other. The streets, which are broad, spacious, and uniform, cross each other at right angles, leaving proper spaces for churches, markets, and other public edifices. The houses are neatly built of brick, the quays spacious and magnificent, the warehouses large and numerous, and the docks commodious and well contrived for ship-building. Pennsylvania is understood to extend as far northerly as the banks of the lake Erie, where the French erected a fort. They also raised another at some distance to the southward of the Riviere-au-Bœuf, and made other encroachments on this colony.

Adjoining to part of Pennsylvania, on the sea-coast, lies the province of Maryland, a tract of land situated along the bay of Chesapeak, in length about one hundred and forty miles, and nearly of the same breadth, bounded on the north by Pennsylvania, on the east by the Atlantic Ocean, and by the river Potowmack on the south. This country was first planted with Roman Catholics by Lord Baltimore, to whom Charles II. granted it by patent. In the sequel, however, people of all religions were admitted into this settlement, and indulged with liberty of conscience, and at present the reigning religion is that of the English church. The climate is very sultry in summer, and not very salubrious. The soil is fruitful, and produces a great quan-

tity of tobacco, which the people cultivate as their staple commodity. The seat of government is established at Annapolis, a small town beautifully situated on the river Patuxent.

Tracing the sea-coast still southerly, the next settlement is Virginia, watered on the north by the river Potowmack, which is the boundary between this and the colony last described, having the bay of Chesapeak to the east, bounded on the south by Carolina, and extending westward without any prescribed limits, though the plantations have reached no farther than the great Allegany mountains; so that the province, as now possessed, stretches in length above two hundred and forty miles, and in breadth not above two hundred, lying between the fifty-fifth and fortieth degrees of latitude. In sailing to Virginia, navigators steer through a strait formed by two points, called the Capes, into the bay of Chesapeak, a large inlet that runs three hundred miles into the country from south to north, covered from the Atlantic Ocean by the eastern side of Maryland, and a small portion of Virginia on the same peninsula. This noble bay is about eighteen miles broad for a considerable space, and seven at its narrowest part, yielding generally nine fathoms depth of water: on both sides it receives many navigable rivers, those on the Virginia side being known by the name of James-river, York-river, the Rappahannock, and Potowmack. This country, especially towards the sea, lies very low and swampy, and the soil is extremely fertile. The air and weather are variable, the heats of summer excessive, the frosts of winter sudden and intensely cold; so that, upon the whole, the climate is neither very agreeable nor healthy, the people being particularly subject to agues and pleuritic disorders. The province abounds with vast forests of timber; the plains are covered with a surprising luxuriancy of vegetables, flowers, and flowering shrubs, diffusing the most delicious fragrance.

The ground yields plenty of corn, and every sort of fruit in great abundance and perfection. Horned cattle and hogs have here multiplied to admiration since they were first imported from Europe. The animals, natives of this and the neighbouring countries, are deer, panthers or tigers, bears, wolves, foxes, squirrels, racoons, and creatures called opossums, with an infinite variety of beautiful birds, and a diversity of serpents, among which the rattle-snake is the most remarkable.

Virginia is bounded to the south by the two Carolinas, situated between the forty-sixth and thirty-first degrees of latitude; the length amounting to upwards of four hundred miles, and the breadth extending near three hundred, as far as the Indian nations called the Catawbas, the Creeks, and Cherokees. The country of Carolina is divided into two governments, of which the most northern is the most inconsiderable. The climate in both is the same, as well as the soil; the first is warm, though not unhealthy; the last extremely fertile, yielding every thing in plenty which is produced in Virginia, besides abundance of excellent oranges, and some commodities which are not found to the northward. North Carolina, though not so opulent, is more populous than the southern part. The colonists of North Carolina carry on a considerable traffic in tar, pitch, turpentine, staves, shingles, lumber, corn, peas, pork and beef, tobacco, deer-skins, indigo, wheat, rice, bees-wax, tallow, bacon, and hog's lard, cotton, and squared timber, live cattle, with the skins of beaver, racoon, fox, minx, wild cat, and otter. South Carolina is much better cultivated; the people are more civilized, and the commerce more important. The capital of this province, called Charles-town, is finely situated at the confluence of two navigable rivers, having the advantage of a commodious harbour. Their trade, exclusive of the articles we have already mentioned as common to this government and that of North Caro-

lina, consists of two chief staple commodities, rice and indigo, which they cultivate with great success; and they have likewise made some progress in the culture of silk.

The most southern of all our settlements on this coast is Georgia, extending about sixty miles from north to south, along the sea-shore; but widening in the inland parts to above one hundred and fifty, and stretching almost three hundred from the sea to the Apalachian mountains. This country differs very little from that of South Carolina, with which it borders; yet the summer is here more hot, and the soil not so fertile. Savannah, the capital, stands commodiously for trade, about ten miles from the sea, on a river of the same name, navigable with large boats two hundred miles farther up to the second town called Augusta, a place that flourishes by the Indian trade of skins, which the inhabitants carry on with their neighbours the Creeks, the Chickesaws, and the Cherokees, who are the most numerous and powerful tribes in America. Georgia is bounded on the south by the river Attamaha, at no great distance from the Spanish fort of St. Augustin.

THE FRENCH SURPRISE LOG'S TOWN ON THE OHIO.

Having thus exhibited a succinct view of the British colonies in North America, for the information of the reader, we shall now resume the thread of our history, and particularize the transactions by which the present year was distinguished on this extensive Continent. The government of England having received nothing but evasive answers from the court of France, touching the complaints that were made of the encroachments in America, despatched orders to all the governors of that country to repel force by force, and drive the

French from their settlements on the river Ohio. Accordingly, the provinces of Virginia and Pennsylvania took this important affair into their consideration; but, while they deliberated, the French vigorously prosecuted their designs on the other side of the mountains; they surprised Log's-town, which the Virginians had built upon the Ohio; made themselves masters of the Block-house and Truck-house, where they found skins and other commodities to the amount of twenty thousand pounds, and destroyed all the British traders, except two who found means to escape. At the same time, M. de Contrecœur, with a thousand men, and eighteen pieces of cannon, arrived in three hundred canoes from Venango, a fort they had raised on the banks of the Ohio, and reduced by surprise a British fort which the Virginians had built on the forks of the Monangahela, that runs into the same river.

CONFERENCE WITH THE INDIANS AT ALBANY.

These hostilities were followed by divers skirmishes between the people of the two nations, which were fought with various success. At length, the governors of the English settlements received orders from England to form a political confederacy for their mutual defence; and the Governor of New York was directed to confer with the chiefs of the six nations, with a view to detach them from the French interest by dint of promises and presents of value, sent over for that purpose. A congress was accordingly appointed at Albany, to which place the Governor of New York repaired, accompanied by commissioners from all the other British settlements; but a very small number of Indians arrived, and even these seemed to be indifferent to the advances and exhortations that were made by the English orator. The truth is, the French had artfully

weaned them from their attachment to the subjects of Great Britain. Nevertheless, they accepted the presents, renewed their treaties with the King of England, and even demanded his assistance in driving the French from the posts and possessions they had usurped within the Indian territories. It was in consequence of the measures here taken, that Colonel Washington was detached from Virginia with four hundred men, and occupied a post on the banks of the river Ohio, where he threw up some works, and erected a kind of occasional fort, in hopes of being able to defend himself in that situation, until he should be joined by a reinforcement from New York, which, however, did not arrive.

COL. WASHINGTON DEFEATED AND TAKEN BY THE FRENCH ON THE OHIO.

While he remained in this situation, De Viller, a French commander, at the head of nine hundred men, being on his march to dislodge Washington, detached one Jamonville, an inferior officer, with a small party, and a formal summons to Colonel Washington, requiring him to quit the fort, which he pretended was built on ground belonging to the French, or their allies. So little regard was paid to this intimation, that the English fell upon this party, and, as the French affirm, without the least provocation, either slew or took the whole detachment. De Viller, incensed at these unprovoked hostilities, marched up to the attack, which Washington for some time sustained under manifold disadvantages. At length, however, he surrendered the fort upon capitulation, for the performance of which he left two officers as hostages in the hands of the French; and in his retreat was terribly harassed by the Indians, who plundered his baggage, and massacred his people. This event was no sooner

known in England, than the British ambassador at Paris received directions to complain of it to the French ministry, as an open violation of the peace; but this representation had no effect.

DIVISIONS AMONG THE BRITISH COLONIES.

Both nations by this time foresaw that a rupture would be inevitable, and each resolved to make suitable preparations. France continued to send reinforcements of men, and supplies of ammunition, to Quebec, for the prosecution of her ambitious projects; and the ministry of Great Britain transmitted salutary cautions to the governors of the provinces of North America, exhorting them to join their endeavours for repelling the incursions of the enemy. Such an union as seemed necessary for their common preservation was not easily effected. The different colonies were divided by different views and interests, both religious and political: besides, every settlement was distracted into factions, formed by the governor and the demagogues of the assembly; in other words, an opposition like that in Parliament, and a continual struggle between the liberties of the people and the prerogative of the proprietor, whether sovereign or subject. Mr. Dinwiddie, Governor of Virginia, having demanded a certain perquisite or fee for every patent he should pass for land, the assembly voted his demand illegal, arbitrary, and oppressive. They declared that every man who paid it should be deemed an enemy to his country; and sent over an agent to London, to solicit the suppression of this imposition. The representatives of the people in Pennsylvania wasted the time in vain deliberations and violent disputes with their proprietors, while the enemy infested their frontiers. The colony of New York was filled with discontent and animosity. Sir Danvers Osborne, who had been appointed governor of this pro-

vince, died immediately after his arrival at New York, and the instructions he had received were exposed to public censure. The preamble inveighed severely against the want of duty, allegiance, loyalty, and unanimity, which had lately appeared so notorious in the assembly of that province, who had violated the royal commission and instructions, by assuming to themselves the power to dispose of public money in the laws which they had occasionally passed. This gentleman was therefore directed to insist upon the reformation of all those public abuses, and upon the establishment of a certain supply for the service of the government, as well as upon the settlement of a salary for himself. Moreover, his majesty, in these instructions, signified his will and pleasure, that all money raised for the supply and support of government, or upon any emergency for immediate service, should be disposed and applied properly to the use for which it might be granted, by warrant from the governor, by and with the advice and consent of the council of the province, and no otherwise: that, nevertheless, the assembly should be permitted, from time to time, to view and examine the accounts of money disposed of, by virtue of laws which they had enacted: that if any member of the council, or officer holding place of trust or profit within the government, should, in any manner whatever, give his assent to, or in any wise advise or concur with the assembly in passing any act or vote, whereby the royal prerogative might be lessened or impaired, or any money be raised or disposed of for the public service, contrary to, or inconsistent with, the method prescribed by these instructions, the governor should forthwith remove or suspend such counsellor or officer so offending, and give an immediate account of his proceedings to the commissioners of trade and plantations. These were peremptory injunctions, which plainly proved that the ministry was determined to support the prerogative

with a high hand; but it must be owned, at the same time, that abundance of provocation had been given by the insolent opposition of some turbulent individuals, who had exerted all their influence in disturbing and distressing the views and designs of the government. While the British colonies in America were, by these divisions, in a great measure disabled from making vigorous efforts against the common enemy, the administration at home began to exert itself for their defence. Officers were appointed for two regiments, consisting of two battalions each, to be raised in America, and commanded by Sir William Pepperel and Governor Shirley, who had enjoyed the same command in the last war, and a body of troops was destined for the same service.

HEREDITARY PRINCE OF HESSE-CASSEL PROFESSES THE CATHOLIC RELIGION.

The most remarkable incident that marked this year, on the Continent of Europe, was the conversion of the hereditary Prince of Hesse-Cassel, who had espoused the Princess Mary of England. He now declared himself a Roman Catholic, and was supposed to have been cajoled to this profession by the promises of certain powers, who flattered his ambition, in order to weaken the protestant interest in Germany. His father, though deeply affected by his son's apostacy, did not fail to take immediate measures for preventing the evil consequences which might otherwise have flowed from his defection. He forthwith assembled the states of the Landgraviate, in order to take such measures as might appear necessary to maintain the religion, laws, and constitution of the country; and the prince was laid under certain restrictions, which he did not find it an easy task to set aside. It was enacted, that when the regency should devolve to him by succession, he should

not have it in his power to alter the established laws, or grant any church to persons of the Roman communion, for the public exercise of their religion; and that he should be excluded from all share in the education of his sons, the eldest of whom should be put in possession of the country of Hanau upon his father's accession to the regency of the Landgraviate. These resolutions were guaranteed by the Kings of Prussia and Denmark, by the maritime powers, and the evangelic body of the empire.

PARLIAMENT OF PARIS RECALLED FROM EXILE.

The exile of the Parliament of Paris, far from having intimidated the other tribunals from performing what they apprehended to be their duty, served only to inflame the discontents of the people, and to animate all the courts of justice to a full exertion of their authority. The Chatelot continued to prosecute those priests, who refused the sacrament to persons whose consciences would not allow them to subscribe to the bull Unigenitus, even after three of their members were sent to the Bastile. The same prosecutions were carried on, and bold remonstrances published by the Parliaments of Aix and Rouen. In a word, the whole kingdom was filled with such confusion as threatened a total suppression of justice, in a general spirit of disaffection, and universal anarchy. The prelates, meanwhile, seemed to triumph in the combustion they had raised. They entered into associations to support each other: they intrigued at court, and harassed the king with insolent declarations, till he grew tired of their proceedings, and opened his eyes to the fatal consequences of their pride and obstinacy. He even took an opportunity of exhorting the Archbishop of Paris to act more suitably to the character of a clergyman. He recalled

the Parliament from exile, and they returned in triumph, amidst the acclamations of the people, who celebrated their arrival at Paris with the most extravagant demonstrations of joy; and the archbishop, notwithstanding the king's express declaration to the contrary, still persisting in countenancing the recusant priests, was banished to Conflans-sous-Charenton.

AFFAIRS OF SPAIN AND PORTUGAL.

In Spain, the interest of Great Britain was so warmly espoused, and so powerfully supported by Mr. Wall, who had been resident in England, that the French party, though countenanced by the queen-mother, and sustained with all the influence of the Marquis de la Ensenada, the prime minister, was totally defeated. The king, being convinced that it would be for the interest of his subjects to live on good terms with England, and well apprised of Ensenada's intrigues, ordered the minister to be arrested and confined, and bestowed upon Mr. Wall the best part of his employments. Nevertheless, the Spaniards in the West Indies continued to oppress the subjects of Great Britain, employed in cutting logwood in the bay of Honduras; and representations on this head being made to the court of Madrid, the dispute was amicably adjusted between Mr. Wall and Sir Benjamin Keene, the British ambassador. While the interest of Britain thus triumphed in Spain, it seemed to lose ground at the court of Lisbon. His Portuguese majesty had formed vast projects of an active commerce, and even established an East India company: in the mean time he could not help manifesting his chagrin at the great quantities of gold which were yearly exported from his dominions, as the balance due from his subjects on English commodities. In his endeavours to check this traffic, which he deemed so detrimental to his subjects, he inflicted

hardships on the British merchants settled at Lisbon: some were imprisoned on frivolous pretences; others deprived of their property, and obliged to quit the kingdom. He insisted upon laying an imposition of two per cent. on all the Portuguese gold that should be exported; but the profits of the trade would not bear such an exaction. Meanwhile, there being a scarcity of corn in Portugal, the kingdom was supplied from England; and the people having nothing but gold to purchase this necessary supply, the king saw the necessity of conniving at the exportation of his coin, and the trade reverted into its former channel.

SESSIONS OPENED.

On the fourteenth day of November, the King of Great Britain opened the session of Parliament with an harangue, which intimated nothing of an approaching rupture. He said that the general state of affairs in Europe had undergone very little alteration since their last meeting; that he had lately received the strongest assurances from his good brother the King of Spain of friendship and confidence, which he would cultivate with harmony and good faith. He declared his principal view should be to strengthen the foundation, and secure the duration, of a general peace; to improve the present advantages of it for promoting the trade of his good subjects, and protecting those possessions which constituted one great source of their wealth and commerce. Finally, he exhorted them to complete their plan for appropriating the forfeited estates in the Highlands to the service of the public. He probably avoided mentioning the encroachments of France, that he might supply no handle for debates on the address, which was carried in both Houses almost without opposition. The government seemed determined to humble the insolence of the French councils; and this disposition was so

agreeable to the people in general, that they grudged no expense, and heartily concurred with the demands of the ministry.

The Commons granted for the service of the ensuing year four millions seventy-three thousand seven hundred and twenty-nine pounds; one million of that sum expressly given for enabling his majesty to augment his forces by land and sea. Thirty-two thousand pounds were allotted as a subsidy to the King of Poland, and twenty thousand to the Elector of Bavaria. These gratifications met with little or no opposition in the committee of supply; because it was taken for granted, that, in case of a rupture, France would endeavour to avail herself of her superiority by land, by invading his Britannic majesty's German dominions; and, therefore, it might be necessary to secure the assistance of such allies on the Continent. That they prognosticated aright, with respect to the designs of that ambitious power, will soon appear in the course of this history; which will also demonstrate how little dependence is to be placed upon the professed attachment of subsidiary princes. The supplies were raised by the standing branches of the revenue, the land-tax and malt-tax, and a lottery for one million; one hundred thousand pounds of it to be deducted for the service of the public, and the remaining nine hundred thousand to be charged on the produce of the sinking-fund, at the rate of three per cent. per annum, to commence from the fifth day of January, in the year one thousand seven hundred and fifty-six. The civil transactions of this session were confined to a few objects. Divers new regulations were made for encouraging and improving the whale and white herring fishery, as well as for finishing and putting in a proper state of defence a new fort, lately built at Anamaboe on the coast of Africa.

BILL IN BEHALF OF CHELSEA PENSIONERS.

Mr. Pitt, the paymaster-general of the forces, brought in a bill, which will ever remain a standing monument of his humanity. The poor disabled veterans who enjoyed the pension of Chelsea hospital were so iniquitously oppressed by a set of miscreants, who supplied them with money per advance, at the most exorbitant rates of usury, that many of them, with their families, were in danger of starving; and the intention of government in granting such a comfortable subsistence was, in a great measure, defeated. Mr. Pitt, perceiving that this evil originally flowed from the delay of the first payment, which the pensioner could not touch till the expiration of a whole year after he had been put upon the list, removed this necessity of borrowing, by providing in the bill, that half a year's pension should be advanced half a year before it is due; and the practice of usury was effectually prevented by a clause, enacting that all contracts should be void by which any pension might be mortgaged. This humane regulation was unanimously approved, and having passed through both Houses with uncommon expedition, received the royal assent.

Notwithstanding the unanimity manifested by the Commons, in every thing relating to the measures for acting vigorously against the common enemy of the nation, they were remarkably disturbed and divided by a contested election of members for Oxfordshire. In the course of this dispute, the strength and influence of what they called the old and new interest, or, to speak more intelligibly, of the tories and whigs in that county, were fully displayed. The candidates sustained on the shoulders of the old interest were Lord Viscount Wenman and Sir James Dashwood: their competitors, whom the new interest supported, and of consequence

the ministry countenanced, were Lord Parker and Sir Edward Turner. Never was any contention of this kind maintained with more spirit and animosity, or carried on at a greater expense. One would have imagined that each side considered it as a dispute which must have determined, whether the nation should enjoy its ancient liberty, or tamely submit to the fetters of corruption. Noblemen and gentlemen, clergymen and ladies, employed all their talents and industry in canvassing for either side, throughout every township and village in the county. Scandal emptied her whole quiver of insinuation, calumny, and lampoon: corruption was not remiss in promises and presents: houses of entertainment were opened: and nothing was for some time to be seen but scenes of tumult, riot, and intoxication. The revenue of many an independent prince on the Continent would not have been sufficient to afford such sums of money as were expended in the course of this dispute. At length they proceeded to election, and the sheriff made a double return of all the four candidates, so that not one of them could sit, and the county remained without a representative until this ambiguous affair could be decided in the House of Commons. About the middle of November, petitions being presented by the four candidates, as well as by the gentlemen, clergy, and other freeholders of the county, complaining of an undue election, and double return, the matter of these petitions was heard at the bar of the House on the third day of December. The counsel for Lord Wenman and Sir James Dashwood alleged, that they had the majority of votes upon the poll, and this circumstance was admitted by the counsel on the other side; then they proceeded to prove by evidence, that, after closing the poll, the sheriff declared the majority of votes to be in favour of these two candidates, and adjourned the court from the twenty-third day of April to the eighth of May; so that the

scrutiny demanded, and granted on the behalf of Lord Parker and Sir Edward Turner, could not be discussed before the last day of the month, when the writ was returnable; that the scrutiny did not begin till the ninth day of May, when the time was protracted by disputes about the manner in which it should be carried on; that Lord Parker and Sir Edward Turner were allowed to object through the whole poll to the votes on the other side, on pretence that their competitors should be permitted to answer these objections, and, in their turn, object through the whole poll to the voters for Lord Parker and Sir Edward Turner, who should, in the last place, have leave to answer; that Lord Wenman and Sir James Dashwood had disapproved of this method, because they apprehended it might induce their competitors to make such a number of frivolous objections, that they should not have time to answer one half of them, much less to make objections of their own, before the writ should be returned; that they foresaw such a number of frivolous objections were made, as engrossed the attention of the court till the twenty-seventh day of May; so that they could not begin to answer any of these objections till the twenty-eighth; and on the thirtieth the sheriff, having closed the scrutiny, made the double return. The proof being exhibited, the counsel insisted, that, as they had established a majority on the poll, and demonstrated that this majority neither was nor could be overthrown by such an unfinished scrutiny, it was incumbent on the other side to proceed upon the merits of the election, by endeavouring to overthrow that majority of which their clients were in possession. A question in the House being carried to the same purpose, Lord Wenman and Sir James Dashwood objected to five hundred and thirty voters on the other side, whom they proposed to disqualify. Their counsel examined several witnesses, to prove the partiality of the sheriff in favour

of Lord Parker and Sir Edward Turner, and to detect these candidates in the practice of bribery; for which purpose they produced a letter in their own handwriting. They afterwards proceeded to disqualify particular voters, and summed up their evidence on the twenty-first day of January. Then the counsel for the other side began to refute the charge of partiality and corruption, and to answer the objections that had been made to particular voters. They produced evidence to prove, that customary freeholders, or customary holdings, had voted at elections in the counties of Glamorgan, Monmouth, Gloucester, Wells, and Hereford; and that the customary tenants of the manor of Woodstock, in Oxfordshire, had been reputed capable of voting, and even voted at elections for that county. In a word, they continued to examine evidences, argue and refute, prove and disprove, until the twenty-third day of April, when, after some warm debates and divisions in the House, Lord Parker and Sir Edward Turner were declared duly elected; and the clerk of the crown was ordered to amend the return, by erasing the names of Lord Wenman and Sir James Dashwood. Many, who presumed to think for themselves, without recollecting the power and influence of the administration, were astonished at the issue of this dispute; which, however, might have easily been foreseen; inasmuch as, during the course of the proceedings, most, if not all, of the many questions debated in the House were determined by a great majority in favour of the new interest. A great number of copyholders had been admitted to vote at this election, and the sheriff incurred no censure for allowing them to take the oath appointed by law to be taken by freeholders: nevertheless, the Commons carefully avoided determining the question, whether copyholders possessed of the yearly value of forty shillings, clear of all deductions, have not a right to vote for knights to represent the shire within which their copy-

hold estates are situated? This point being left doubtful by the legislature, puts it often in the power of the sheriff to return which of the candidates he pleases to support; for if the majority of the voting copyholders adheres to the interest of his favourites, he will admit their votes both on the poll and the scrutiny; whereas, should they be otherwise disposed, he will reject them as unqualified. What effect this practice may have upon the independency of Parliament, every person must perceive who reflects, that in almost all the counties of England the high sheriffs are annually appointed by the minister for the time being.

MESSAGE FROM THE KING TO THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

The attention of the legislature was chiefly turned upon the conduct of France, which preserved no medium, but seemed intent upon striking some important blow, that might serve as a declaration of war. At Brest, and other ports in that kingdom, the French were employed in equipping a powerful armament, and made no scruple to own it was intended for North America. Towards the latter end of March, Sir Thomas Robinson, secretary of state, brought a message from the king to the Parliament, intimating, that his majesty having, at the beginning of the session, declared his principal object was to preserve the public tranquillity, and at the same time to protect those possessions which constitute one great source of the commerce and wealth of his kingdoms, he now found it necessary to acquaint the House of Commons, that the present situation of affairs made it requisite to augment his forces by sea and land, and to take such other measures as might best tend to preserve the general peace of Europe, and to secure the just rights and possessions of his crown in America, as well as to repel any attempts

whatsoever that might be made to support or countenance any designs which should be formed against his majesty and his kingdoms; and his majesty doubted not but his faithful Commons, on whose affection and zeal he entirely relied, would enable him to make such augmentations, and to take such measures for supporting the honour of his crown, and the true interest of his people, and for the security of his dominions in the present critical conjuncture, as the exigency of affairs might require; in doing which his majesty would have as much regard to the ease of his good subjects as should be consistent with their safety and welfare. In answer to this message a very warm and affectionate address was presented to his majesty; and it was on this occasion that the million was granted for augmenting his forces by sea and land[s]. The court of Versailles, notwithstanding the assiduity and despatch which they were exerting in equipping armaments, and embarking troops, for the support of their ambitious schemes in America, still continued to amuse the British ministry with general declarations, that no hostility was intended, nor the least infringement of the treaty.

COURT OF VERSAILLES AMUSES THE ENGLISH MINISTRY.

The Earl of Albemarle, the English ambassador at Paris, having lately died in that city, these assurances were communicated to the court of London by the Marquis de Mirepoix, who resided in England with the same character, which he had supported since his first arrival with equal honour and politeness. On this occasion he himself was so far imposed upon by the instructions he had received, that he believed the professions of his court were sincere, and seriously endeavoured to prevent a rupture between the two nations.

[s] See note [F], vol. vi.

At length, however, their preparations were so notorious that he began to suspect the consequence; and the English ministry produced such proofs of their insincerity and double dealing, that he seemed to be struck with astonishment and chagrin. He repaired to France, and upbraided the ministry of Versailles for having made him the tool of their dissimulation. They referred him to the king, who ordered him to return to London, with fresh assurances of his pacific intentions; but his practice agreed so ill with his professions, that the ambassador had scarce obtained an audience to communicate them, when undoubted intelligence arrived, that a powerful armament was ready to sail from Brest and Rochefort. The government of Great Britain, roused by this information, immediately took the most expeditious methods for equipping a squadron; and towards the latter end of April, Admiral Boscawen sailed with eleven ships of the line and one frigate, having on board a considerable number of land forces, to attend the motions of the enemy: but more certain and particular intelligence arriving soon after, touching the strength of the French fleet, which consisted of twenty-five ships of the line, besides frigates and transports, with a great quantity of warlike stores, and four thousand regular troops, commanded by the Baron Dieskau, Admiral Holbourne was detached with six ships of the line, and one frigate, to reinforce Mr. Boscawen; and a great number of capital ships were put in commission. In the beginning of May, the French fleet, commanded by Mr. Macnamara, an officer of Irish extraction, sailed from Brest, directing his course to North America; but, after having proceeded beyond the chops of the English channel, he returned with nine of the capital ships, while the rest of the armament continued their course, under the direction of M. Bois de la Mothe.

SESSION CLOSED.

On the twenty-fifth day of April, the king went to the House of Lords, where, after giving the royal assent to the bills then depending; for granting a certain sum out of the sinking-fund; for the relief of insolvent debtors; for the better regulation of marine forces on shore; for the better raising of marines and seamen; and to several other public and private bills; his majesty put an end to the session of Parliament by a speech, in which he acquainted the two Houses, that the zeal they had shown for supporting the honour, rights, and possessions of his crown, had afforded him the greatest satisfaction: that his desire to preserve the public tranquillity had been sincere and uniform: that he had religiously adhered to the stipulations of the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, and made it his care not to injure or offend any power whatsoever; but that he never could entertain a thought of purchasing the name of peace at the expense of suffering encroachments upon, or of yielding up, what justly belonged to Great Britain, either by ancient possession or by solemn treaties: that the vigour and firmness of his Parliament, on this important occasion, had enabled him to be prepared for such contingencies as might happen: that, if reasonable and honourable terms of accommodation could be agreed upon, he would be satisfied, and, at all events, rely on the justice of his cause, the effectual support of his people, and the protection of Divine Providence. The Parliament was then prorogued to the twenty-seventh of May.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Preparations for War.—Earl Paulet's Motion against the King's going to Hanover.—Regency appointed during his Majesty's Absence.—Boscawen's Expedition.—Alcide and Lys taken.—French Ambassador recalled.—Their Trade greatly distressed.—Affairs of the English in America.—Colonel Monckton takes Beau-sejour.—General Braddock's unfortunate Expedition.—He falls into an Ambuscade; is defeated and killed.—Disagreement between the Governor and Assembly of Pennsylvania.—Expedition against Crown-Point and Niagara resolved on.—General Johnson encamps at Lake George.—Where he is attacked by the French, who are entirely defeated.—Bravery of Captain M'Ginnes.—General Johnson created a Baronet.—Description of Fort Oswego and Lake Ontario.—Neglect of the English in not fortifying it.—Expedition against Niagara.—General Shirley returns to Albany.—End of the Campaign in America.—Fruitless Intrigues of the French in Spain and Germany.—Treaty of the King of Great Britain with the Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel.—News of the Capture of the Alcide and Lys reaches England.—The King returns from Hanover, and concludes a Treaty with Russia.—Declaration of the French Ministry at the Court of Vienna.—Spirited Declaration of the King of Prussia.—The French make another unsuccessful Attempt upon the Court of Spain.—The imperial Court refuses Auxiliaries to England.—The French take the Blandford Man of War, but return it.—State of the English and French Navies.—Session opened.—Remarkable Addresses of the Lords and Commons.—His Majesty's Answer.—Alterations in the Ministry. Mr. Fox made Secretary of State.—Supplies voted.—Earthquake at Lisbon.—Relief voted by Parliament to the Portuguese.—Troops, &c. voted.—Mutiny Bill, Marine, and Mariners' Acts continued.—Act for raising a Regiment of Foot in North America.—Maritime Laws of England extended to America.—Quiet of Ireland restored.—Treaty concluded with Prussia.—New Militia Bill passed by the Commons, but rejected by the Lords.—Session closed.

PREPARATIONS FOR WAR.

Whilst all Europe was in suspense about the fate of the English and French squadrons, preparations for a vigorous sea war were going forward in England with an unparalleled spirit and success. Still the French court flattered itself that Great Britain, out of tenderness to his majesty's German dominions, would abstain from hostilities. Mirepoix continued to have frequent conferences with the British ministry, who made no secret that their admirals, particularly Boscawen, had orders to attack the French ships wherever they should meet them; on the other hand, Mons. de Mirepoix declared, that his master would consider the first gun fired at sea in an hostile manner as a declaration of war. This menace, far from intimidating the English, animated them to redouble their preparations for war. The press for seamen was carried on with extraordinary vigour in all parts of this kingdom, as well as in Ireland; and great premiums were given not only by the government, but also over and above his majesty's bounty, by almost all the considerable cities and towns in England, to such as should inlist voluntarily for sailors or soldiers. Other branches of the public service went on with equal alacrity; and such was the eagerness of the people to lend their money to the government, that instead of one million, which was to be raised by way of lottery, three millions eight hundred and eighty thousand pounds were subscribed immediately.

EARL PAULET'S MOTION AGAINST THE KING'S GOING TO HANOVER.

The situation of affairs requiring his majesty to go to Germany this summer, great apprehensions arose in the

minds of many, lest the French should either intercept him in his journey, or prevent his return. Earl Paulet had made a motion in the House of Lords, humbly to represent to his majesty, "That it was an article in the original act of settlement by which the succession of these kingdoms devolved to his electoral house, that the king should not go to his foreign dominions without the consent of Parliament; and that this was a principal article in the compact between the crown and the people: that though this article was repealed in the late reign, yet, till of late, it had always been the custom for his majesty to acquaint the Parliament with his intended departure to his German dominions, both in regard to the true sense and spirit of the act that placed him on the throne, as well as for the paternal kindness of his royal heart, and the condescension he had been so good to show to his Parliament on all occasions; but that his majesty's declaration of his design to visit his electoral estates had always come on the last day of a session, when it was too late for the great constitutional council of the crown to offer such advice as might otherwise have been expedient and necessary: that his majesty's leaving his kingdoms in a conjuncture so pregnant with distress, so denunciative of danger, would not only give the greatest advantage to such as might be disposed to stir up disaffection and discontent, and to the constitutional and national enemies of England; but would also fill his loyal subjects with the most affecting concern, and most gloomy fears, as well for their own safety, as for that of their sovereign, whose invaluable life, at all times of the utmost consequence to his people, was then infinitely so, by reason of his great experience, the affection of every one to his royal person, and the minority of the heir apparent." Such was the purport of this motion; but it was not seconded by any of the other lords.

REGENCY APPOINTED DURING HIS MAJESTY'S ABSENCE.

The general uneasiness, on account of his majesty's departure, was greatly increased by an apprehension that there would, during his absence, be no good agreement amongst the regency, which consisted of the following persons: his royal highness William, Duke of Cumberland; Thomas, Lord Archbishop of Canterbury; Philip, Earl of Hardwicke, lord high chancellor; John, Earl of Granville, president of the council; Charles, Duke of Marlborough, lord privy-seal; John, Duke of Rutland, steward of the household; Charles, Duke of Grafton, lord chamberlain; Archibald, Duke of Argyle; the Duke of Newcastle, first commissioner of the treasury; the Duke of Dorset, master of the horse; the Earl of Holdernesse, one of the secretaries of state; the Earl of Rochford, groom of the stole; the Marquis of Hartington, lord lieutenant of Ireland; Lord Anson, first commissioner of the Admiralty; Sir Thomas Robinson, secretary of state; and Henry Fox, Esq. secretary at war. His majesty set out from St. James's the twenty-eighth of April early in the morning, embarked at Harwich in the afternoon, landed the next day at Helvoetsluys, and arrived at Hanover on the second of May.

BOSCAWEN'S EXPEDITION. ALCIDE AND LYS TAKEN.

Admiral Boscawen, with eleven ships of the line and a frigate, having taken on board two regiments at Plymouth, sailed from thence on the twenty-seventh of April for the banks of Newfoundland, and in a few days after his arrival there, the French fleet from Brest came to the same station, under the command of M. Bois de la Mothe. But the thick fogs which prevail upon these

coasts, especially at that time of the year, kept the two armaments from seeing each other; and part of the French squadron escaped up the river St. Lawrence, whilst another part of them went round and got into the same river, through the straits of Belleisle, by a way which was never known to be attempted before by ships of the line. However, whilst the English fleet lay off Cape Race, which is the southernmost point of Newfoundland, and was thought to be the most proper situation for intercepting the enemy, two French ships, the Alcide, of sixty-four guns, and four hundred and eighty men, and the Lys pierced for fifty-four guns, but mounting only twenty-two, having eight companies of land-forces on board, being separated from the rest of their fleet in the fog, fell in with the Dunkirk, Captain Howe, and the Defiance, Captain Andrews, two sixty gun ships of the English squadron; and after a smart engagement which lasted some hours, and in which Captain (afterwards Lord) Howe behaved with the greatest skill and intrepidity, were both taken, with several considerable officers and engineers, and about eight thousand pounds in money. Though the capture of these ships, from which the commencement of the war may in fact be dated, fell greatly short of what was hoped for from this expedition; yet, when the news of it reached England, it was of infinite service to the public credit of every kind, and animated the whole nation, who now saw plainly that the government was determined to keep no further measures with the French, but justly to repel force by force, and put a stop to their sending more men and arms to invade the property of the English in America, as they had hitherto done with impunity. The French, who for some time did not even attempt to make reprisals on our shipping, would gladly have chosen to avoid a war at that time, and to have continued extending their encroachments on our settlements till they had executed their grand plan of

securing a communication from the Mississippi to Canada by a line of forts, many of which they had already erected.

FRENCH AMBASSADOR RECALLED.

Upon the arrival of the news of this action at Paris, the French ambassador, M. de Mirepoix, was recalled from London, and M. de Bussy from Hanover, where he had just arrived, to attend the King of England in a public character. They complained loudly of Boscawen's attacking the ships, as a breach of national faith; but it was justly retorted on the part of England, that their encroachments in America had rendered reprisals both justifiable and necessary. The resolution of making them was the effect of mature deliberation in the English council. The vast increase of the French marine of late years, which in all probability would soon be employed against Great Britain, occasioned an order for making reprisals general in Europe as well as in America; and that all French ships, whether outward or homeward bound, should be stopped, and brought into British ports. To give the greater weight to these orders, it was resolved to send out those admirals who had distinguished themselves most towards the end of the last war. Accordingly, on the twenty-first of July, Sir Edward Hawke sailed on a cruise to the westward, with eighteen ships of the line, a frigate, and a sloop; but not meeting with the French fleet, these ships returned to England about the latter end of September and the beginning of October; on the fourteenth of which last month another fleet, consisting of twenty-two ships of the line, two frigates, and two sloops, sailed again on a cruise to the westward, under Admiral Byng, in hopes of intercepting the French squadron under Duguay, and likewise that commanded by La Mothe, in case of its return from America. But this fleet likewise re-

turned to Spithead on the twenty-second of November, without having been able to effect any thing, though it was allowed by all that the admiral had acted judiciously in the choice of his stations.

While these measures were pursued, for the general security of the British coasts and trade in Europe, several new ships of war were begun, and finished with the utmost expedition, in his majesty's docks: twelve frigates and sloops, contracted for in private yards, were completed by the month of August; and twenty-four ships and twelve colliers were then taken into the service of the government, to be fitted out as vessels of war, to carry twenty guns, and one hundred and twenty men each. In the mean time the French trade was so annoyed by the English cruisers, that before the end of this year three hundred of their merchant ships, many of which, from St. Domingo and Martinico, were extremely rich, and eight thousand of their sailors, were brought into English ports. By these captures the British ministry answered many purposes: they deprived the French of a great body of seamen, and withheld from them a very large property, the want of which greatly distressed their people, and ruined many of their traders. Their outward-bound merchant ships were insured at the rate of thirty per cent., whilst the English paid no more than the common insurance. This intolerable burden was felt by all degrees of people amongst them: their ministry was publicly reviled, even by their Parliaments; and the French name, from being the terror, began to be the contempt of Europe. Their uneasiness was also not a little heightened by new broils between their king and the Parliament of Paris, occasioned by the obstinacy of the clergy of that kingdom, who seemed determined to support the church, in all events, against the secular tribunals, and, as much as possible, to enforce the observance of the bull Unigenitus, which had long been the occasion of so many

disputes among them. However, the Parliament continuing firm, and the French king approving of its conduct, the ecclesiastics thought proper to submit for the present; and in their general assembly this year granted him a free gift of sixteen millions of livres, which he demanded of them—a greater sum than they had ever given before, even in time of war.

AFFAIRS OF THE ENGLISH IN AMERICA. COL. MONCKTON TAKES BEAU-SEJOUR.

In the beginning of this year the assembly of Massachusett's Bay in New England passed an act, prohibiting all correspondence with the French at Louisbourg; and early in the spring they raised a body of troops, which was transported to Nova Scotia, to assist Lieutenant-Governor Laurence in driving the French from the encroachments they had made upon that province. Accordingly, towards the end of May, the governor sent a large detachment of troops, under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Monckton, upon this service; and three frigates and a sloop were despatched up the bay of Fundy, under the command of Captain Rous, to give their assistance by sea. The troops, upon their arrival at the river Massaguash, found the passage stopped by a large number of regular forces, rebel neutrals, or Acadians, and Indians, four hundred and fifty of whom occupied a block-house, with cannon mounted on their side of the river; and the rest were posted within a strong breast-work of timber, thrown up by way of outwork to the block-house. The English provincials attacked this place with such spirit, that the enemy were obliged to fly, and leave them in possession of the breast-work; then the garrison in the block-house deserted it, and left the passage of the river free. From thence Colonel Monckton advanced to the French fort of Beau-sejour, which he invested, as far at least as the

small number of his troops would permit, on the twelfth of June; and after four days' bombardment obliged it to surrender, though the French had twenty-six pieces of cannon mounted, and plenty of ammunition, and the English had not yet placed a single cannon upon their batteries. The garrison was sent to Louisbourg, on condition of not bearing arms in America for the space of six months; and the Acadians, who had joined the French, were pardoned, in consideration of their having been forced into that service. Colonel Monckton, after putting a garrison into this place, and changing its name to that of Cumberland, the next day attacked and reduced the other French fort upon the river Gaspereau, which runs into Bay Verte; where he likewise found a large quantity of provisions and stores of all kinds, that being the chief magazine for supplying the French Indians and Acadians with arms, ammunition, and other necessaries. He then disarmed these last, to the number of fifteen thousand; and in the mean time, Captain Rous with his ships sailed to the mouth of the river St. John, to attack the new fort the French had erected there; but they saved him that trouble, by abandoning it upon his appearance, after having burst their cannon, blown up their magazine, and destroyed, as far as they had time, all the works they had lately raised. The English had but twenty men killed, and about the same number wounded, in the whole of this expedition, the success of which secured the tranquillity of Nova Scotia.

GENERAL BRADDOCK'S UNFORTUNATE EXPEDITION.

While the New Englanders were thus employed in reducing the French in Nova Scotia, preparations were made in Virginia for attacking them upon the Ohio. A fort was built, which was likewise called Fort Cum-

berland, and a camp formed at Will's Creek. On the fourteenth of January of this year, Major-General Braddock, with Colonel Dunbar's and Colonel Halket's regiments of foot, sailed from Cork, in Ireland, for Virginia, where they all landed safe before the end of February. This general might consequently have entered upon action early in the spring, had he not been unfortunately delayed by the Virginian contractors for the army, who, when he was ready to march, had neither provided a sufficient quantity of provisions for his troops, nor a competent number of carriages for his army. This accident was foreseen by almost every person who knew any thing of our plantations upon the Continent of America; for the people of Virginia, who think of no produce but their tobacco, and do not raise corn enough even for their own subsistence, being by the nature of their country well provided with the conveniency of water conveyance, have but few wheel carriages, or beasts of burden; whereas Pennsylvania, which abounds in corn, and most other sorts of provisions, has but little water carriage, especially in its western settlements, where its inhabitants have great numbers of carts, waggons, and horses. Mr. Braddock should, therefore, certainly in point of prudence have landed in Pennsylvania: the contract for supplying his troops should have been made with some of the chief planters there, who could easily have performed their engagements: and if his camp had been formed near Frank's-town, or somewhere upon the south-west borders of that province, he would not have had eighty miles to march from thence to Fort Du Quesne, instead of a hundred and thirty miles that he had to advance from Will's Creek, where he did encamp, through roads neither better nor more practicable than the other would have been. This error in the very beginning of the expedition, whether owing to an injudicious preference fondly given to the Virginians in the lucrative job of

supplying these troops, or to any other cause, delayed the march of the army for some weeks, during which it was in the utmost distress for necessaries of all kinds; and would probably have defeated the expedition entirely for that summer, had not the contractors found means to procure some assistance from the back settlements of Pennsylvania. But even when these supplies did arrive, they consisted of only fifteen waggons and a hundred draft horses, instead of a hundred and fifty waggons and three hundred horses, which the Virginian contractors had engaged to furnish, and the provisions were so bad that they could not be used. However, some gentlemen in Pennsylvania, being applied to in this exigency, amply made up for these deficiencies, and the troops were by this means supplied with every thing they wanted. Another and still more fatal error was committed, in the choice of the commander for this expedition. Major-General Braddock, who was appointed to it, was undoubtedly a man of courage, and expert in all the punctilios of a review, having been brought up in the English guards: but he was naturally very haughty, positive, and difficult of access; qualities ill suited to the temper of the people amongst whom he was to command. His extreme severity in matters of discipline had rendered him unpopular among the soldiers; and the strict military education in which he had been trained from his youth, and which he prided himself on scrupulously following, made him hold the American militia in great contempt, because they could not go through their exercise with the same dexterity and regularity as a regiment of guards in Hyde-Park; little knowing, or indeed being able to form any idea of the difference between the European manner of fighting, and an American expedition through woods, deserts, and morasses. Before he left England, he received, in the hand-writing of Colonel Napier, a set of instructions from the Duke

of Cumberland. By these the attempt upon Niagara was, in a great measure, referred to him, and the reduction of Crown-Point was to be left chiefly to the provincial forces. But above all, his royal highness, both verbally and in this writing, frequently cautioned him carefully to beware of an ambush or surprise. Instead of regarding this salutary caution, his conceit of his own abilities made him disdain to ask the opinion of any under his command; and the Indians, who would have been his safest guards against this danger in particular, were so disgusted by the haughtiness of his behaviour, that most of them forsook his banners. Under these disadvantages he began his march from Fort Cumberland on the tenth of June, at the head of about two thousand two hundred men, for the meadows, where Colonel Washington was defeated the year before. Upon his arrival there, he was informed that the French at Fort du Quesne, which had lately been built on the same river, near its confluence with the Monangahela, expected a reinforcement of five hundred regular troops; therefore, that he might march with a greater despatch, he left Colonel Dunbar, with eight hundred men, to bring up the provisions, stores, and heavy baggage, as fast as the nature of the service would permit; and with the other twelve hundred, together with ten pieces of cannon, and the necessary ammunition and provisions, he marched on with so much expedition, that he seldom took any time to reconnoitre the woods or thickets he was to pass through; as if the nearer he approached the enemy, the farther he was removed from danger.

On the eighth of July he encamped within ten miles of Fort du Quesne. Though Colonel Dunbar was then near forty miles behind him, and his officers, particularly Sir Peter Halket, earnestly entreated him to proceed with caution, and to employ the friendly Indians who were with him, by way of advanced guard, in case of ambuscades; yet he resumed his march the next

day, without so much as endeavouring to obtain any intelligence of the situation or disposition of the enemy, or even sending out any scouts to visit the woods and thickets on both sides of him, as well as in front. With this carelessness he was advancing, when, about noon, he was saluted with a general fire upon his front, and all along his left flank, from an enemy so artfully concealed behind the trees and bushes, that not a man of them could be seen. The vanguard immediately fell back upon the main body, and in an instant the panic and confusion became general; so that most of the troops fled with great precipitation, notwithstanding all that their officers, some of whom behaved very gallantly, could do to stop their career. As to Braddock himself, instead of scouring the thickets and bushes from whence the fire came, with grape shot from the ten pieces of cannon he had with him, or ordering flanking parties of the Indians to advance against the enemy, he obstinately remained upon the spot where he was, and gave orders for the few brave officers and men who staid with him, to form regularly, and advance. Meanwhile his men fell thick about him, and almost all his officers were singled out, one after another, and killed or wounded; for the Indians, who always take aim when they fire, and aim chiefly at the officers, distinguished them by their dress. At last, the general, whose obstinacy seemed to increase with the danger, after having had some horses shot under him, received a musket shot through the right arm and lungs, of which he died in a few hours, having been carried off the field by the bravery of Lieutenant-Colonel Gage, and another of his officers. When he dropped, the confusion of the few that remained turned into a downright and very disorderly flight across a river which they had just passed, though no enemy appeared, or attempted to attack them. All the artillery, ammunition, and baggage of the army were left to the enemy, and, among

the rest, the general's cabinet, with all his letters and instructions, which the French court afterwards made great use of in their printed memorials or manifestoes. The loss of the English in this unhappy affair amounted to seven hundred men. Their officers, in particular, suffered much more than in the ordinary proportion of battles in Europe. Sir Peter Halket fell by the very first fire, at the head of his regiment; and the general's secretary, son to Governor Shirley, was killed soon after. Neither the number of men which the enemy had in this engagement, nor the loss which they sustained, could be so much as guessed at: but the French afterwards gave out, that their number did not, in the whole, exceed four hundred men, mostly Indians; and that their loss was quite inconsiderable, as it probably was, because they lay concealed in such a manner that the English knew not whither to point their muskets. The panic of these last continued so long, that they never stopped till they met the rear division; and even then they infected those troops with their terrors; so that the army retreated without stopping, till they reached Fort Cumberland, though the enemy did not so much as attempt to pursue, nor even appeared in sight, either in the battle, or after the defeat. On the whole, this was perhaps the most extraordinary victory that ever was obtained, and the farthest flight that ever was made.

Had the shattered remains of this army continued at Fort Cumberland, and fortified themselves there, as they might easily have done, during the rest of the summer, they would have been such a check upon the French and their scalping Indians, as would have prevented many of those ravages that were committed in the ensuing winter upon the western borders of Virginia and Pennsylvania; but, instead of taking that prudent step, their commander left only the sick and wounded at that fort, under the protection of two com-

panies of the provincial militia, posted there by way of garrison, and began his march on the second of August, with about sixteen hundred men, from Philadelphia; where those troops could be of no immediate service. From thence they were ordered away to Albany, in New York, by General Shirley, on whom the chief command of the troops in America had devolved by the death of Major-General Braddock. Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania, were by these means left entirely to take care of themselves, which they might have done effectually, had they been united in their councils; but the usual disputes between their governors and assemblies defeated every salutary plan that was proposed. Pennsylvania, the most powerful of the three, was rendered quite impotent, either for its own defence, or that of its neighbours, by these unhappy contests; though, at last, the assembly of that province, sensible of the danger to which they were exposed, and seeing the absolute necessity of providing a standing military force, and of erecting some forts to defend their western frontier, passed a bill for raising fifty thousand pounds. But even this sum, small as it was, even to a degree of ridicule, considering the richness of the province, and the extent of its frontier, could not be obtained; the governor positively refusing to give his assent to the act of the assembly, because they had taxed the proprietaries' estates equally with those of the inhabitants, which, he said, he was ordered by his instructions not to consent to, nor indeed any new tax upon the proprietaries; and the assembly, consisting chiefly of members whose estates lay in the eastern or interior parts of the province, as positively refusing to alter their bill. One would be apt to think that, in a case of such urgent necessity, the governor might have ventured to give his assent to the bill under a protest, that it should not prejudice the rights of the proprietaries upon any future occasion; but as he did not, the bill was dropped,

and the province left defenceless; by which means it afterwards suffered severely, to the destruction of many of the poor inhabitants upon the western frontier, and to the impressing the Indians with a contemptible opinion of the English, and the highest esteem of the French.

EXPEDITION AGAINST CROWN POINT AND NIAGARA RESOLVED ON.

Our colonies to the north of Pennsylvania were more active, and more successful in their preparations for war. New York, following the example of New England, passed an act to prohibit the sending of provisions to any French port or settlement on the Continent of North America, or any of the adjacent islands; and also for raising forty-five thousand pounds, on estates real and personal, for the better defence of their colony, which lay more exposed than any other to a French invasion from Crown-Point. However, this sum, great as it might seem to them, was far from being sufficient; nor, indeed, could they have provided properly for their security, without the assistance of our other colonies to the east of them; but with their help, and the additional succour of the small body of regular troops expected under Colonel Dunbar, they boldly resolved upon offensive measures, which, when practicable, are always the safest; and two expeditions, one against the French fort at Crown-Point, and the other against their fort at Niagara, between the lakes Ontario and Erie, were set on foot at the same time. The former of these expeditions was appointed to be executed under the command of General Johnson, a native of Ireland, who had long resided upon the Mohock river, in the western parts of New York, where he had acquired a considerable estate, and was universally beloved, not only by the inhabitants, but also by the neighbouring Indians, whose

language he had learnt, and whose affections he had gained by his humanity towards them. The expedition against Niagara was commanded by General Shirley himself.

The rendezvous of the troops for both these expeditions was appointed to be at Albany, where most of them arrived before the end of June: but the artillery, batteaux, provisions, and other necessaries for the attempt upon Crown-Point, could not be prepared till the eighth of August, when General Johnson set out with them from Albany for the Carrying-place from Hudson's river to Lake George. There the troops had already arrived, under the command of Major-General Lyman, and consisted of between five and six thousand men, besides Indians, raised by the governments of Boston, Connecticut, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and New York. Every thing was then prepared as fast as possible for a march; and towards the end of the month, General Johnson advanced about fourteen miles forward with his troops, and encamped in a very strong situation, covered on each side by a thick wooded swamp, by Lake George in his rear, and by a breast-work of trees, cut down for that purpose, in his front. Here he resolved to wait the arrival of his batteaux, and afterwards to proceed to Ticonderoga, at the other end of the lake, from whence it was about fifteen miles to the fort at the south end of Lake Corlaer, or Champlain, called Fort Frederick by the French, and by us Crown-Point. Whilst he was thus encamped, some of his Indian scouts, of which he took care to send out numbers along both sides, and to the farther end of Lake George, brought him intelligence that a considerable number of the enemy were then on their march from Ticonderoga, by the way of the south bay, towards the fortified encampment, since called Fort Edward, which General Lyman had built at the Carrying-place; and in which four or five hundred of the

New Hampshire and New York men had been left as a garrison. Upon this information General Johnson sent two expresses, one after the other, to Colonel Blanchard, their commander, with orders to call in all his out-parties, and to keep his whole force within the intrenchments. About twelve o'clock at night, those who had been sent upon the second express returned with an account of their having seen the enemy within four miles of the camp at the Carrying-place, which they scarcely doubted their having by that time attacked. Important as the defence of this place was for the safety of the whole army, and imminent as the danger seemed to be, it does not appear that the general then called any council of war, or resolved upon any thing for its relief; but early the next morning he called a council, wherein it was unadvisedly resolved to detach a thousand men, with a number of Indians, to intercept, or, as the general's expression was in his letter, to catch the enemy in their retreat, either as victors, or as defeated in their design. This expedient was resolved on, though no one knew the number of the enemy, nor could obtain any information in that respect from the Indian scouts, because the Indians have no words or signs for expressing any large number, which, when it exceeds their reckoning, they signify by pointing to the stars in the firmament, or to the hair of their head; and this they often do to denote a number less than a thousand, as well as to signify ten thousand, or any greater number.

Between eight and nine o'clock in the morning, a thousand men, with two hundred Indians, were detached under the command of Colonel Williams; but they had not been gone two hours, when those in the camp began to hear a close firing, at about three or four miles distance, as they judged: as it approached nearer and nearer, they rightly supposed that the detachment was overpowered, and retreating towards the

camp; which was soon confirmed by some fugitives, and presently after by whole companies, who fled back in great confusion. In a very short time after, the enemy appeared marching in regular order up to the centre of the camp, where the consternation was so great, that, if they had attacked the breast-work directly, they might probably have thrown all into confusion, and obtained an easy victory; but, fortunately for the English, they halted for some time about a hundred and fifty yards distance, and from thence began their attack with platoon firing, too far off to do much hurt, especially against troops who were defended by a strong breast-work. On the contrary, this ineffectual fire served only to raise the spirits of these last, who, having prepared their artillery during the time that the French halted, began to play it so briskly upon the enemy, that the Canadians and Indians in their service fled immediately into the woods on each side of the camp, and there squatted under bushes, or skulked behind trees, from whence they continued firing with very little execution, most of their shot being intercepted by the brakes and thickets; for they never had the courage to advance to the verge of the wood. Baron Dieskau, who commanded the French, being thus left alone, with his regular troops, at the front of the camp, finding he could not make a close attack upon the centre with his small number of men, moved first to the left, and then to the right, at both which places he endeavoured to force a passage, but was repulsed, being unsupported by the irregulars. Instead of retreating, as he ought in prudence to have done, he still continued his platoon and bush-firing till four o'clock in the afternoon, during which time his regular troops suffered greatly by the fire from the camp, and were at last thrown into confusion; which was no sooner perceived by General Johnson's men, than they, without waiting for orders, leaped over their breast-work, attacked the enemy on

all sides, and, after killing and taking a considerable number of them, entirely dispersed the rest. The French, whose numbers, at the beginning of this engagement, amounted to about two thousand men, including two hundred grenadiers, eight hundred Canadians, and the rest Indians of different nations, had between seven and eight hundred men killed, and thirty taken prisoners: among the latter was Baron Dieskau himself, whom they found at a little distance from the field of battle, dangerously wounded, and leaning on the stump of a tree for his support. The English lost about two hundred men, and those chiefly of the detachment under Colonel Williams; for they had very few either killed or wounded in the attack upon their camp, and not any of distinction, except Colonel Titcomb killed, and the general himself and Major Nichols wounded. Among the slain of the detachment, which would probably have been entirely cut off, had not Lieutenant-Colonel Cole been sent out from the camp with three hundred men, with which he stopped the enemy's pursuit, and covered the retreat of his friends, were Colonel Williams, Major Ashley, six captains, and several subalterns, besides private men; and the Indians reckoned that they had lost forty men, besides the brave old Hendrick, the Mohock Sachem, or chief captain.

BRAVERY OF CAPTAIN M'GINNES.

When Baron Dieskau set out from Ticonderoga, his design was only to surprise and cut off the intrenched camp, now called Fort Edward, at the Carrying-place, where there were but four or five hundred men. If he had executed this scheme, our army would have been thrown into great difficulties; for it could neither have proceeded farther, nor have subsisted where it was, and he might have found an opportunity to attack it with great advantage in its retreat. But when he was within

four or five miles of that fort, his people were informed that there were several cannon there, and none at the camp; upon which they all desired to be led on to this last, which he the more readily consented to, as he himself had been told by an English prisoner, who had left this camp but a few days before, that it was quite defenceless, being without any lines, and destitute of cannon; which, in effect, was true at that time; for the cannon did not arrive, nor was the breast-work erected, till about two days before the engagement. To this misinformation, therefore, must be imputed this step, which would otherwise be inconsistent with the general character and abilities of Baron Dieskau. A less justifiable error seems to have been committed by General Johnson, in not detaching a party to pursue the enemy when they were defeated and fled. Perhaps he was prevented from so doing by the ill fate of the detachment he had sent out in the morning under Colonel Williams. However that may be, his neglect, in this respect, had like to have been fatal the next day to a detachment sent from Fort Edward, consisting of a hundred and twenty men of the New Hampshire regiment, under Captain M'Ginnes, as a reinforcement to the army at the camp. This party fell in with between three and four hundred men of Dieskau's troops, near the spot where Colonel Williams had been defeated the day before; but M'Ginnes having timely notice, by his scouts, of the approach of an enemy, made such a disposition, that he not only repulsed the assailants, but defeated and entirely dispersed them, with the loss only of two men killed, eleven wounded, and five missing. He himself unfortunately died of the wounds he received in this engagement, a few days after he arrived at the camp with his party.

It was now judged too late in the year to proceed to the attack of Crown-Point, as it would have been necessary, in that case, to build a strong fort in the

place where the camp then was, in order to secure a communication with Albany, from whence only the troops could expect to be reinforced, or supplied with fresh stores of ammunition or provisions. They, therefore, set out upon their return soon after this engagement, having first erected a little stockaded fort, at the hither end of Lake George, in which they left a small garrison, as a future prey for the enemy; a misfortune which might easily have been foreseen, because this whole army, being country militia, was to be disbanded, and return to their respective homes, as they actually did soon after their retreat to Albany. This was all the glory, this all the advantage, that the English nation acquired by such an expensive expedition. But so little had the English been accustomed of late to hear of victory, that they rejoiced at this advantage, as if it had been an action of the greatest consequence. The general was highly applauded for his conduct, and liberally rewarded; for he was created a baronet by his majesty, and presented with five thousand pounds by the Parliament.

DESCRIPTION OF FORT OSWEGO AND LAKE ONTARIO.

The preparations for General Shirley's expedition against Niagara were not only deficient, but shamefully slow; though it was well known that even the possibility of his success must, in a great measure, depend upon his setting out early in the year, as will appear to any person who considers the situation of our fort at Oswego, this being the only way by which he could proceed to Niagara. Oswego lies on the south-east side of the lake Ontario, near three hundred miles almost due west from Albany in New York. The way to it from thence, though long and tedious, is the more convenient, as the far greatest part of it admits of water carriage, by

what the inhabitants called batteaux, which are a kind of light flat-bottomed boats, widest in the middle, and pointed at each end, of about fifteen hundred weight burden, and managed by two men, called batteaux men, with paddles and setting poles, the rivers being in many places too narrow to admit of oars. From Albany to the village of Shenectady, about sixteen miles, is a good waggon-road. From thence to the little Falls in the Mohock river, being sixty-five miles, the passage is by water carriage up that river, and consequently against the stream, which, in many places, is somewhat rapid, and in others so shallow, that, when the river is low, the watermen are obliged to get out, and draw their batteaux over the rifts. At the little Falls is a postage, or land carriage, for about a mile, over a ground so marshy, that it will not bear any wheel carriage; but a colony of Germans settled there attend with sledges, on which they draw the loaded batteaux to the next place of embarkation upon the same river. From thence they proceed by water up that river, for fifty miles, to the Carrying-place, near the head of it, where there is another postage, the length of which depends upon the dryness or wetness of the season, but is generally above six or eight miles over in the summer months. Here the batteaux are again carried upon sledges, till they come to a narrow river called Wood's Creek, down which they are wafted on a gentle stream, for about forty miles, into the lake Oneyada, which stretches from east to west about thirty miles, and is passed with great ease and safety in calm weather. At the western end of the lake is the river Onondaga, which, after a course of between twenty and thirty miles, unites with the river Cayuga, or Seneca, and their united streams run into the lake Ontario, at the place where Oswego fort is situated. But this river is so rapid as to be sometimes dangerous, besides its being full of rifts and rocks; and about twelve miles on this

side of Oswego there is a fall of eleven feet perpendicular, where there is consequently a postage, which, however, does not exceed forty yards. From thence the passage is easy, quite to Oswego. The lake Ontario, on which this fort stands, is near two hundred and eighty leagues in circumference: its figure is oval, and its depth runs from twenty to twenty-five fathoms. On the north side of it are several little gulfs. There is a communication between this lake and that of the Hurons by the river Tanasuate, from whence it is a land carriage of six or eight leagues to the river Toronto, which falls into it. The French have two forts of consequence on this lake: Frontenac, which commands the river St. Lawrence, where the lake communicates with it; and Niagara, which commands the communication between the lake Ontario and the lake Erie. But of these forts, and this last lake, which is one of the finest in the world, we shall have occasion to speak hereafter.

Though we had long been in possession of fort Oswego, and though it lay greatly exposed to the French, particularly to those of Canada, upon any rupture between the two nations, we had never taken care to render it tolerably defensible, or even to build a single vessel fit for navigating the lake: nor was this strange neglect ever taken effectual notice of, till the beginning of this year, when, at a meeting which General Braddock had in April with the governors and chief gentlemen of several of our colonies at Alexandria, in Virginia, it was resolved to strengthen both the forts and garrison at Oswego, and to build some large vessels at that place. Accordingly a number of shipwrights and workmen were sent thither in May and June. At the same time, Captain Bradstreet marched thither with two companies of a hundred men each, to reinforce the hundred that were there before under Captain King, to which number the garrison had been increased since our contests with France began to grow serious. For

a long time before, not above twenty-five men were left to defend this post, which, from its great importance, and the situation of affairs at this juncture, most certainly required a much stronger garrison than was put into it even at this period: but economy was the chief thing consulted in the beginning of this war, and to that, in a great measure, was owing its long duration.

EXPEDITION AGAINST NIAGARA.

From the above description of the passage from Albany to Oswego, it is plain how necessary it was, that the troops intended for this expedition should have set out early in the spring. But instead of that, the very first of them, Colonel Schuyler's New Jersey regiment, did not begin their march till after the beginning of July; and just as Shirley's and Pepperell's regiments were preparing to follow, the melancholy account of Braddock's disaster arrived at Albany, where it so damped the spirits of the people, and spread such a terror, that many of the troops deserted, and most of the batteaux men dispersed, and ran home, by which means even all the necessary stores could not be carried along with the troops. Notwithstanding this disappointment, General Shirley set out from Albany before the end of July, with as many of the troops and stores as he could procure a conveyance for, hoping to be joined in his route by great numbers of the Indians of the Six Nations, to whom he sent invitations to that effect as he passed by their settlements: but they, instead of complying with his desire, absolutely declared against all hostilities on that side of the country; and insisted that Oswego, being a place of traffic and peace, ought not to be disturbed either by the English or the French, as if they could have persuaded both parties to agree to such a local truce. Upon this refusal, Mr. Shirley proceeded forward, being joined by very few

Indians, and arrived at Oswego on the seventeenth or eighteenth of August; but the rest of the troops and artillery did not arrive till the last day of that month; and even then their store of provisions was not sufficient to enable them to proceed against Niagara, though some tolerably good vessels had by this time been built and got ready for that purpose. The general now resolved to take but six hundred men with him for the attack of Niagara, and to leave the rest of his army, consisting of about fourteen hundred more, at Oswego, to defend that place, in case the French should attack it in his absence, which there was reason to apprehend they might, as they then had a considerable force at fort Frontenac, from whence they could easily cross over the lake Ontario to Oswego. However, he was still obliged to wait at Oswego for provisions, of which at length a small supply arrived on the twenty-sixth of September, barely sufficient to support his men during their intended expedition, and to allow twelve days short subsistence for those he left behind. But by this time the rainy boisterous season had begun, on which account most of his Indians had already left him, and were returned home; and the few that remained with him declared that there was no crossing the lake Ontario in batteaux at that season, or any time before the next summer. In this perplexity he called a council of war, which, after weighing all circumstances, unanimously resolved to defer the attempt upon Niagara till the next year, and to employ the troops, whilst they remained at Oswego, in building barracks, and erecting, or at least beginning to erect, two new forts, one on the east side of the river Onondaga, four hundred and fifty yards distant from the old fort, which it was to command, as well as the entrance of the harbour, and to be called Ontario fort; and the other, four hundred and fifty yards west of the old fort, to be called Oswego new fort.

GEN. SHIRLEY RETURNS TO ALBANY. END OF THE CAMPAIGN IN AMERICA.

These things being agreed on, General Shirley, with the greatest part of the troops under his command, set out on his return to Albany on the twenty-fourth of October, leaving Colonel Mercer, with a garrison of about seven hundred men, at Oswego; though repeated advice had been received, that the French had then at least a thousand men at their fort of Frontenac, upon the same lake; and what was still worse, the new forts were not yet near completed; but left to be finished by the hard labour of Colonel Mercer and his little garrison, with the addition of this melancholy circumstance, that, if besieged by the enemy in the winter, it would not be possible for his friends to come to his assistance. Thus ended this year's unfortunate campaign, during which the French, with the assistance of their Indian allies, continued their murders, scalping, captivating, and laying waste the western frontiers of Virginia and Pennsylvania, during the whole winter.

The ministers of the two jarring powers were very busily employed this year at most of the courts of Europe; but their transactions were kept extremely secret. The French endeavoured to inspire the Spaniards with a jealousy of the strength of the English by sea, especially in America; and the Spanish court seemed inclined to accept of the office of mediator: but Mr. Wall, who was perfectly well acquainted with the state of affairs between England and France, seconded the representations of the British ministry, which demonstrated, that, however willing Great Britain might be to accept of the mediation of Spain, she could not agree to any suspension of arms in America, which France insisted on as a preliminary condition, without hazarding the whole of her interest there; and that

the captures which had been made by the English were the necessary consequences of the encroachments and injustice of the French, particularly in that country. Upon this remonstrance, all further talk of the mediation of Spain was dropped, and the ministry of Versailles had recourse to the princes of Germany; amongst whom the Elector of Cologn was soon brought over to their party, so as to consent to their forming magazines in his territories in Westphalia. This was a plain indication of their design against Hanover, which they soon after made his Britannic majesty, who was then at Hanover, an offer of sparing, if he would agree to certain conditions of neutrality for that electorate, which he rejected with disdain. Then the Count d'Aubeterre, envoy extraordinary from France at the court of Vienna, proposed a secret negotiation with the ministers of the empress-queen. The secret articles of the treaty of Petersburgh, between the two empresses, had stipulated a kind of partition of the Prussian territories, in case that prince should infringe the treaty of Dresden; but his Britannic majesty, though often invited, had always refused to agree to any such stipulation; and the King of Poland, howsoever he might be inclined to favour the scheme, did not dare to avow it formally, till matters should be more ripe for carrying it into execution. The court of Vienna, whose favourite measure this was, began to listen to D'Aubeterre's insinuations, and by degrees entered into negotiations with him, which, in the end, were productive of that unnatural confederacy between the empress-queen and the King of France, of which further notice will be taken in the occurrences of the next year, when the treaty between them, into which they afterwards found means secretly to bring the Empress of Russia, was concluded at Versailles.

TREATY OF THE KING OF GREAT BRITAIN WITH THE LANDGRAVE OF HESSE-CASSEL.

The King of England, taking it for granted that the French would invade Hanover, in consequence of their rupture with Great Britain, which seemed to be near at hand, began to take measures for the defence of that electorate. To this end, during his stay at Hanover, he concluded, on the eighteenth of June, a treaty with the Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel, by which his serene highness engaged to hold in readiness, during four years, for his majesty's service, a body of eight thousand men, to be employed, if required, upon the Continent, or in Britain or Ireland; but not on board the fleet or beyond the seas; and also, if his Britannic majesty should judge it necessary or advantageous for his service, to furnish and join to this body of eight thousand men, within six months after they should be demanded, four thousand more, of which seven hundred were to be horse or dragoons, and each regiment of infantry to have two field pieces of cannon[t]. Another treaty was begun with Russia about the same time; but this did not take effect during his majesty's residence at Hanover: that others were not concluded was the more surprising, as our subsidy treaty with Saxony had then expired, and that with Bavaria was near expiring, and as the securing of these two princes in our interest was at least as necessary towards forming a sufficient confederacy upon the Continent for the defence of Hanover, as it was to secure the Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel. If the reason of their not being engaged, and no other seems so probable, was, that they refused to renew their treaties with England upon any terms, all that can be said is that they were guilty of

[t] See note [G], vol. vi.

flagrant ingratitude, as they had both received a subsidy from this kingdom for many years in time of peace, when they neither were nor could be of any service to the interest of Great Britain.

NEWS OF THE CAPTURE OF THE ALCIDE AND LYS REACHES ENGLAND.

On the fifteenth of July an express arrived from Admiral Boscawen, with an account of his having taken the two French ships of war, the Alcide and the Lys. This was certainly contrary to the expectation of the court of France; for had they apprehended any such attack, they would not have ordered Mr. M'Namara to return to Brest with the chief part of their squadron; nor was it, perhaps, less contrary to the expectation of some of our own ministry; but as matters had been carried so far, it was then too late to retreat; and, therefore, orders were soon after given to all our ships of war to make reprisals upon the French, by taking their ships wherever they should meet them. Sir Edward Hawke sailed from Portsmouth on the twenty-first of July, with eighteen ships of war, to watch the return of the French fleet from America, which, however, escaped him, and arrived at Brest on the third day of September. Commodore Frankland sailed from Spithead for the West Indies on the thirteenth of August with four ships of war, furnished with orders to commit hostilities, as well as to protect our trade and sugar islands from any insult that the French might offer; and the Duke de Mirepoix, their ambassador at the court of London, set out for Paris on the twenty-second of July, without taking leave.

THE KING RETURNS FROM HANOVER, AND CONCLUDES A TREATY WITH RUSSIA.

A war being thus in some measure begun, his majesty thought proper, perhaps for that reason, to return to his British dominions sooner than usual; for he left Hanover on the eighth of September, and arrived on the fifteenth at Kensington, where the treaty of alliance between him and the Empress of Russia, which he had begun during his absence, was concluded on the thirtieth of the same month. By this treaty her Russian majesty engaged to hold in readiness in Livonia, upon the frontiers of Lithuania, a body of troops consisting of forty thousand infantry, with the necessary artillery, and fifteen thousand cavalry; and also on the coast of the same province, forty or fifty galleys, with the necessary crews; to be ready to act, upon the first order, in his majesty's service, in case, said the fifth article, which was the most remarkable, that the dominions of his Britannic majesty in Germany should be invaded on account of the interests or disputes which regard his kingdoms; her imperial majesty declaring that she would look upon such an invasion as a case of the alliance of the year one thousand seven hundred and forty-two; and that the said dominions should be therein comprised in this respect; but neither these troops nor galleys were to be put in motion, unless his Britannic majesty, or his allies, should be somewhere attacked; in which case the Russian general should march, as soon as possible after requisition, to make a diversion with thirty thousand infantry and fifteen thousand cavalry; and should embark on board the galleys the other ten thousand infantry, to make a descent according to the exigency of the affair. On the other side, his Britannic majesty engaged to pay to her Russian majesty an annual subsidy of a hundred thousand

pounds sterling a year, each year to be paid in advance, and to be reckoned from the day of the exchange of the ratifications, to the day that these troops should upon requisition march out of Russia; from which day the annual subsidy to her imperial majesty was to be five hundred thousand pounds sterling, to be paid always four months in advance, until the troops should return into the Russian dominions, and for three months after their return. His Britannic majesty, who was to be at liberty to send once every year into the said province of Livonia a commissary, to see and examine the number and condition of the said troops, further engaged, that in case her Russian majesty should be disturbed in this diversion, or attacked herself, he would furnish immediately the succour stipulated in the treaty of one thousand seven hundred and forty-two; and that in case a war should break out, he would send into the Baltic a squadron of his ships, of a force suitable to the circumstances. This was the chief substance of the treaty which, by agreement of both parties, was to subsist for four years from the exchange of the ratifications; but in the seventh article these words were unluckily inserted: "Considering also the proximity of the countries wherein the diversion in question will probably be made, and the facility her troops will probably have of subsisting immediately in an enemy's country, she takes upon herself alone, during such a diversion, the subsistence and treatment of the said troops by sea and land." And in the eleventh article it was stipulated, that all the plunder the Russian army should take from the enemy should belong to them. That his Britannic majesty, who now knew enough of the court of Vienna to be sensible that he could expect no assistance from thence, in case his German dominions were invaded, should enter into this convention with the Empress of Russia, in order to strengthen his defence upon the Continent, was ex-

tremely natural; especially as he had lately lived in great friendship with her, and her transactions with the court of France had been so secret, by passing through only that of Vienna, that he had not yet been informed of them; neither had the project of the treaty of Versailles then come to his knowledge, or to that of the King of Prussia, nor had either of these princes yet made any formal advances to the other.

DECLARATION OF THE FRENCH MINISTRY AT THE COURT OF VIENNA.

The first intimation that appeared publicly of the negotiations of France with the Empress of Germany, was, when the French minister, Count d'Aubeterre, declared at Vienna, "That the warlike designs with which the king his master was charged were sufficiently confuted by his great moderation, of which all Europe had manifold proofs; that his majesty was persuaded this groundless charge had given as much indignation to their imperial majesties as to himself; that he was firmly resolved to preserve to Christendom that tranquillity which it enjoyed through his good faith, in religiously observing the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle; but that if his Britannic majesty's allies should take part in the war which was kindled in America, by furnishing succours to the English, his majesty would be authorised to consider and treat them as principals in it." France likewise made the same declaration to other courts.

SPIRITED DECLARATION OF THE KING OF PRUSSIA.

The words and stipulation in the above recited clause, in the seventh article of the treaty of Great Britain with Russia, were looked on as a menace levelled at the

King of Prussia, who, having some time found means to procure a copy of this treaty, and seeing it in that light, boldly declared, by his ministers at all the courts of Europe, that he would oppose, with his utmost force, the entrance of any foreign troops into the empire, under any pretence whatever. This declaration was particularly displeasing to the French, who had already marched large bodies of troops towards the frontiers of the empire, and erected several great magazines in Westphalia, with the permission of the Elector of Cologn, for which the English minister at his court was, in August, ordered to withdraw from thence without taking leave. However, as soon as this declaration of the King of Prussia was notified to the court of Versailles, they sent an ambassador extraordinary, the Duke de Nivernois, to Berlin, to try to persuade his majesty to retract his declaration, and enter into a new alliance with them. His Prussian majesty received this ambassador in such a manner, as seemed to denote a disposition to agree to every thing he had to propose. This awakened in England a jealousy that his declaration alone was not to be relied on, but that it was necessary to bring him under some solemn engagement; especially as the French had by this time a numerous army near the Lower Rhine, with magazines provided for their march all the way to Hanover; and if the King of Prussia suffered them to pass through his dominions, that electorate must be swallowed up before the Russian auxiliaries could possibly be brought thither, or any army be formed for protecting it[u]. For this reason a negotiation was set on foot by Great Britain at Berlin; but as it was not concluded before the beginning of the next year, we shall defer entering into the particulars of it till we come to that period.

[u] Perhaps the Elector of Hanover was more afraid of the Prussian monarch than of the most christian king, knowing with what ease and rapidity this enterprising neighbour could, in a few days, subdue the whole electorate.

THE FRENCH MAKE ANOTHER UNSUCCESSFUL ATTEMPT UPON THE COURT OF SPAIN.

Meanwhile the French made another attempt upon the court of Madrid, loudly complaining of the taking of their two men of war by Boscawen's squadron, before any declaration of war was made, representing it as a most unjustifiable proceeding, which threatened a dissolution of all faith amongst nations. This produced a strong memorial from Sir Benjamin Keene, our minister at that court, importing, "That it was well known that the French fleet carried troops, ammunition, and every thing necessary for defending the countries which the French had unjustly usurped in America, and of which the English claimed the property; that the rules of self-defence authorize every nation to render fruitless any attempt that may tend to its prejudice; that this right had been made use of only in taking the two French ships of war; and that the distinction of place might be interpreted in favour of the English, seeing the two ships were taken on the coasts of the countries where the contest arose." In answer to this observation, the French minister represented the vast number of ships that had been taken in the European seas; for in fact the English ports soon began to be filled with them in consequence of the general orders for making reprisals. But the court of Madrid was so far from being persuaded by any thing he could say, that it gave his Britannic majesty the strongest assurances of its friendship, and of its intention to take no part in the differences between him and France, but such as should be conciliatory, and tending to restore the public tranquillity.

THE IMPERIAL COURT REFUSES AUXILIARIES TO ENGLAND.

On the other hand, his Britannic majesty required, as King of Great Britain, the auxiliaries stipulated to him by treaty from the empress-queen. But these were refused, under pretence, that as the contest between him and France related to America only, it was not a case of the alliance; though at the same time the French made no scruple of owning, that they intended to make a powerful descent on Great Britain early in the spring. When, a little while after, France being employed in making great preparations for a land war in Europe, the King of England required her to defend her own possessions, the barrier in the Low Countries, with the number of men stipulated by treaty, which countries, acquired by English blood and English treasure, had been given to her on that express condition, she declared that she could not spare troops for that purpose, on account of her dangerous enemy the King of Prussia; and afterwards, when he was secured by his treaty with England, she urged that as a reason for her alliance with France. It must be owned, however, for the sake of historical truth, that this was no bad reason, considering the power, the genius, and the character of that prince, who hovered over her dominions with an army of one hundred and fifty thousand veterans. It must likewise be owned, that she undertook to procure the French king's consent to a neutrality for Hanover, which would have effectually secured that electorate from the invasion of every other power but Prussia itself; and it is no strained conjecture to suppose, that the dread of this very power was the true source of those connexions in Germany, which entailed such a ruinous continental war upon Great Britain.

THE FRENCH TAKE THE BLANDFORD MAN OF WAR, BUT RETURN IT.

Though the English continued to make reprisals upon the French, not only in the seas of America, but also in those of Europe, by taking every ship they could meet with, and detaining them, their cargoes, and crews; yet the French, whether from a consciousness of their want of power by sea, or that they might have a more plausible plea to represent England as the aggressor, were so far from returning these hostilities, that their fleet, which escaped Sir Edward Hawke, having, on the thirteenth of August, taken the Blandford ship of war with Governor Lyttelton on board, going to Carolina, they set the governor at liberty, as soon as the court was informed of the ship's being brought into Nantes, and shortly after released both the ship and crew. However, at the same time, their preparations for a land war still went on with great diligence, and their utmost arts and efforts were fruitlessly exerted to persuade the Spaniards and Dutch to join with them against Great Britain.

STATE OF THE ENGLISH AND FRENCH NATIVES.

In England the preparations by sea became greater than ever, several new ships of war were put in commission, and many others taken into the service of the government; the exportation of gunpowder was forbid; the bounties to seamen were continued, and the number of those that either entered voluntarily or were pressed increased daily, as did also the captures from the French, among which was the Esperance, of seventy guns, taken as she was going from Rochefort to Brest to be manned. The land forces of Great Britain were likewise ordered to be augmented; several new regiments were raised,

and all half-pay officers, and the out-pensioners belonging to Chelsea-hospital, were directed to send in their names, ages, and time of service, in order that such of them as were yet able to serve might be employed again if wanted. The English navy, so early as in the month of September of this year, consisted of one ship of a hundred and ten guns, five of a hundred guns each, thirteen of ninety, eight of eighty, five of seventy-four, twenty-nine of seventy, four of sixty-six, one of sixty-four, thirty-three of sixty, three of fifty-four, twenty-eight of fifty, four of forty-four, thirty-five of forty, and forty-two of twenty, four sloops of war of eighteen guns each, two of sixteen, eleven of fourteen, thirteen of twelve, and one of ten, besides a great number of bomb-ketches, fire-ships, and tenders; a force sufficient to oppose the united maritime strength of all the powers in Europe; whilst that of the French, even at the end of this year, and including the ships then upon the stocks, amounted to no more than six ships of eighty guns, twenty-one of seventy-four, one of seventy-two, four of seventy, thirty-one of sixty-four, two of sixty, six of fifty, and thirty-two frigates.

SESSION OPENED.

Such was the situation of the two kingdoms when, on the thirteenth of November, the Parliament met, and his majesty opened the session with a speech from the throne, in which he acquainted them—"That the most proper measures had been taken to protect our possessions in America, and to regain such parts thereof as had been encroached upon, or invaded; that to preserve his people from the calamities of war, as well as to prevent a general war from being lighted up in Europe, he had been always ready to accept reasonable and honourable terms of accommodation, but that none such had been proposed by France; that he had also

confined his views and operations to hinder France from making new encroachments, or supporting those already made; to exert his people's right to a satisfaction for hostilities committed in time of profound peace, and to disappoint such designs as, from various appearances and preparations, there was reason to think had been formed against his kingdoms and dominions; that the King of Spain earnestly wished the preservation of the public tranquillity, and had given assurances of his intention to continue in the same pacific sentiments; that he himself had greatly increased his naval armaments, and augmented his land forces in such a manner as might be least burdensome; and, finally, that he had concluded a treaty with the Empress of Russia, and another with the Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel, which should be laid before them."

REMARKABLE ADDRESSES OF THE LORDS AND COMMONS.

In answer to this speech, both Houses voted most loyal addresses, but not without a warm opposition, in each, to some of the particular expressions; for it having been proposed in the House of Lords to insert in their address the words following, viz.—"That they looked upon themselves as obliged, by the strongest ties of duty, gratitude, and honour, to stand by and support his majesty in all such wise and necessary measures and engagements as his majesty might have taken in vindication of the rights of his crown, or to defeat any attempts which might be made by France, in resentment for such measures, and to assist his majesty in disappointing or repelling all such enterprises as might be formed, not only against his kingdoms, but also against any other of his dominions (though not belonging to the crown of Great Britain) in case they should be attacked on account of the part which his

majesty had taken for maintaining the essential interests of his kingdoms;" the inserting of these words in their address was opposed by Earl Temple, and several other lords; because, by the first part of them, they engaged to approve of the treaties with Russia and Hesse-Cassel, neither of which they had ever seen; nor could it be supposed that either of them could be of any advantage to this nation; and by the second part of these words it seemed to be resolved, to engage this nation in a continental connexion for the defence of Hanover, which it was impossible for England to support, and which would be so far from being of any advantage to it at sea, or in America, that it might at last disable the nation from defending itself in either of those parts of the world. But upon putting the question, the inserting of these words was agreed to by a great majority, and accordingly they stand as part of the address of the House upon that occasion.

HIS MAJESTY'S ANSWER.

To this remarkable address his majesty returned the following as remarkable answer: "My lords, I give you my hearty thanks for this dutiful and affectionate address. I see, with the greatest satisfaction, the zeal you express for my person and government, and for the true interest of your country, which I am determined to adhere to. The assurances which you give me for the defence of my territories abroad are a strong proof of your affection for me, and regard for my honour. Nothing shall divert me from pursuing those measures which will effectually maintain the possessions and rights of my kingdoms, and procure reasonable and honourable terms of accommodation."—The address of the House of Commons breathed the same spirit of zeal and gratitude, and was full of the warmest assurances of a ready support of his majesty,

and of his foreign dominions, if attacked in resentment of his maintaining the rights of his crown and kingdom; and his majesty's answer to it was to the same effect as that to the House of Lords. The same, or nearly the same words, relating to the treaties concluded by his majesty, and to the defence of his foreign dominions, were proposed to be inserted in this address, which was opposed by William Pitt, Esq. then paymaster of his majesty's forces; the Right Hon. Henry Legge, Esq. then chancellor and under-treasurer of his majesty's exchequer, and one of the commissioners of the treasury; and by several other gentlemen in high posts under the government, as well as by many others; but upon putting the question, it was by a considerable majority agreed to insert the words objected to; and very soon after, Mr. Pitt, Mr. Legge, and most, if not all, of the gentlemen who had appeared in the opposition, were dismissed from their employments. In the mean time, a draft came over from Russia for part of the new subsidy stipulated to that crown; but some of the ministry, who were then at the head of the finances, refused to pay it, at least before the treaty should be approved of by Parliament.

ALTERATIONS IN THE MINISTRY. MR. FOX MADE SECRETARY OF STATE.

Sir Thomas Robinson had not been long in possession of the office of secretary of state, before it was generally perceived, that, though an honest, well-meaning man, and a favourite with the king, his abilities were not equal to the functions of that post. Much less were they so at this juncture, when the nation was on the point of being engaged in a difficult and expensive war, and plunged into foreign measures and connexions, which would require the utmost skill of an able politician to render them palatable to the people.

Mr. Pitt and Mr. Fox, though they scarce ever agreed in any other particular, had generally united in opposing his measures, and their superior influence in the House of Commons, and universally acknowledged abilities, though of very different kinds, had always prevailed, uncommon as it was, to see two persons who held considerable places under the government, one of them being paymaster-general, and the other secretary at war, oppose, upon almost every occasion, a secretary of state, who was supposed to know and speak the sentiments of his master. Sir Thomas himself soon grew sensible of his want of sufficient weight in the senate of the nation; and, therefore, of his own accord, on the tenth of November, wisely and dutifully resigned the seals of his office to his majesty, who delivered them to Mr. Fox, and appointed Sir Thomas master of the wardrobe, with a pension to him during his life, and after his death to his sons. Lord Barrington succeeded Mr. Fox as secretary at war; and soon after Sir George Lyttelton was made chancellor of the exchequer, and a lord of the treasury, in the room of Mr. Legge, who had declared himself against the new continental system. However, notwithstanding these changes in the ministry, very warm debates arose in both Houses, when the treaties of Russia and Hesse-Cassel came to be considered by them: some of the members were for referring them to a committee; but this motion was overruled, in consideration of his majesty's having engaged in them to guard against a storm that seemed ready to break upon his electoral dominions, merely on account of our quarrel with the French. They were at length approved of by a majority of three hundred and eighteen against one hundred and twenty-six, in the House of Commons; and by eighty-four against eleven, in the House of Lords.

The House of Commons then proceeded to provide for the service of the ensuing year, and for the defi-

ciencies of the provisions for the former. Fifty thousand seamen, including nine thousand one hundred and thirty-eight marines, were voted, on the twenty-fourth of November, for the service of the year one thousand seven hundred and fifty-six, together with two millions six hundred thousand pounds for their maintenance, and thirty-four thousand two hundred and sixty-three land soldiers, with nine hundred and thirty thousand six hundred and three pounds, six shillings, and ninepence for their support. A hundred thousand pounds were voted as a subsidy to the Empress of Russia; fifty-four thousand one hundred and forty pounds, twelve shillings, and sixpence, to the Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel; and ten thousand pounds to the Elector of Bavaria.

EARTHQUAKE AT LISBON.

During these transactions, the public was overwhelmed with consternation by the tidings of a dreadful earthquake, which, on the first of November, shook all Spain and Portugal, and many other places in Europe, and laid the city of Lisbon in ruins. When the news of this great calamity first reached England, it was feared the consequences of it might affect our public credit, considering the vast interest which the English merchants had in the Portuguese trade; but fortunately, it afterwards proved inconsiderable, in comparison of what had been apprehended; the quarter in which the English chiefly lived, and where they had their warehouses, having suffered the least of any part of the city; and most of the English merchants then residing there, together with their families, being at their country-houses, to avoid the insults to which they might have been exposed from the Portuguese populace, during the celebration of their *auto-da-fe*, which was kept that very day. The two first shocks of this dreadful visita-

tion continued near a quarter of an hour, after which the water of the river Tagus rose perpendicularly above twenty feet, and subsided to its natural bed in less than a minute. Great numbers of houses, of which this city then contained about thirty-six thousand, extending in length near six miles, in form of a crescent, on the ascent of a hill, upon the north shore of the mouth of the river Tagus, within nine miles from the ocean, were thrown down by the repeated commotions of the earth, together with several magnificent churches, monasteries, and public buildings. But what entirely completed the ruin of this then most opulent capital of the Portuguese dominions, was a devouring conflagration, partly fortuitous or natural, but chiefly occasioned by a set of impious villains, who, unawed by the tremendous scene at that very instant passing before their eyes, with a wickedness scarcely to be credited, set fire even to the falling edifices in different parts of the city, to increase the general confusion, that they might have the better opportunity to rob and plunder their already desolated fellow-citizens. Out of three hundred and fifty thousand inhabitants, which Lisbon was then supposed to contain, about ten thousand perished by this calamity; and the survivors, deprived of their habitations, and destitute even of the necessaries of life, were forced to seek for shelter in the open fields.

RELIEF VOTED BY PARLIAMENT TO THE PORTUGUESE.

As soon as his majesty received an account of this deplorable event from his ambassador at the court of Madrid, he sent a message to both Houses of Parliament, on the twenty-eighth of November, acquainting them therewith, and desiring their concurrence and assistance towards speedily relieving the unhappy sufferers; and the Parliament thereupon, to the honour

of British humanity, unanimously voted, on the eighth of December, a gift of a hundred thousand pounds for the distressed people of Portugal. A circumstance which enhances the merit of this action is, that though the English themselves were, at that very time, in great want of grain, a considerable part of the sum was sent in corn, flour, rice, and a large quantity of beef from Ireland; supplies which came very seasonably for the poor Portuguese, who were in actual want of the necessaries of life. Their king was so affected by this instance of British generosity, that, to show his gratitude for the timely relief, he ordered Mr. Castres, the British resident at his court, to give the preference, in the distribution of these supplies, to the British subjects who had suffered by the earthquake; accordingly, about a thirtieth part of the provisions, and two thousand pounds in money, were set apart for that purpose; and his Portuguese majesty returned his thanks, in very warm terms, to the British crown and nation.

The report of an intended invasion of these kingdoms by the French increasing daily, on the twenty-second day of January Lord Barrington, as secretary at war, laid before the House an estimate for defraying the charge of ten new regiments of foot, over and above the thirty-four thousand two hundred and sixty-three land soldiers before ordered to be raised; and a sum of ninety-one thousand nine hundred and nineteen pounds, ten shillings, was voted for these additional forces: upon another estimate presented a little after by the same lord, and founded upon the same reasons, for raising, for the further defence of the kingdom, eleven troops of light dragoons, forty-nine thousand six hundred and twenty-eight pounds, eleven shillings, and three-pence, were voted for the ensuing year; together with eighty-one thousand one hundred and seventy-eight pounds, sixteen shillings, for a regiment of foot to be raised in North America; two hundred

and ninety-eight thousand five hundred and thirty-four pounds, seventeen shillings, and ten-pence halfpenny, for the maintenance of our forces already established in our American colonies; and seventy-nine thousand nine hundred and fifteen pounds, six shillings, for six regiments of foot from Ireland, to serve in North America and the East Indies. Besides all these supplies, Mr. Fox, on the twenty-eighth of January, presented to the House a message from the king, desiring them to take into consideration the faithful services of the people of New England, and of some other parts of North America; upon which one hundred and fifteen thousand pounds more were voted, and five thousand pounds as a reward to Sir William Johnson in particular. In short, including several other sums, as well for defraying the expense of the army and navy, as for a subsidy of twenty thousand pounds to the King of Prussia, and one hundred and twenty-one thousand four hundred and forty-seven pounds, two shillings, and sixpence, for Hanoverian troops, of which two last articles further notice will be taken hereafter, the whole of the supplies granted by Parliament in this session amounted to seven millions two hundred and twenty-nine thousand one hundred and seventeen pounds, four shillings, and sixpence three farthings. For raising this sum, besides the malt-tax, and the land-tax of four shillings in the pound, the whole produce of the sinking-fund, from the fifth of January one thousand seven hundred and fifty-six, till it should amount to one million five hundred and fifty-five thousand nine hundred and fifty-five pounds, eleven shillings, and eleven-pence halfpenny, was ordered to be applied thereunto; together with a million to be raised by loans or exchequer-bills, at three per cent. interest: one million five hundred thousand pounds to be raised by the sale of redeemable annuities, at three and a half per cent., and five hundred thousand pounds to be raised by a lottery, at three per

cent. All which sums, with eighty-three thousand four hundred and twelve pounds, two shillings, and five-pence halfpenny, then remaining in the exchequer, amounted to seven millions four hundred and twenty-seven thousand two hundred and sixty-one pounds, five shillings, and seven-pence.

MUTINY BILL, MARINE, AND MARINERS ACTS CONTINUED.

The clause inserted in the mutiny bill last year, subjecting all officers and soldiers raised in America, by authority of the respective governors or governments there, to the same rules and articles of war, and the same penalties and punishments as the British forces were liable to; the act passed at the same time for regulating the marine forces while on shore, and that for the most speedy and effectual manning of his majesty's navy, were not only confirmed now; but it was further enacted, with respect to this last, as well as for the more speedy and effectual recruiting of his majesty's land forces, that the commissioners appointed by the present act should be empowered to raise and levy, within their respective jurisdictions, such able-bodied men as did not follow any lawful calling or employment, or had not some other lawful and sufficient support; and might order, wherever and whenever they pleased, a general search to be made for such persons, in order to their being brought before them to be examined; nay, that the parish or town officers might, without any such order, search for and secure such persons, in order to convey them before the said commissioners to be examined; that if any three commissioners should find any person, so brought before them, to be within the above description, and if the recruiting officer attending should judge him to be a man fit for his majesty's service, they should cause him to be delivered to such officer, who

might secure him in any place of safety provided by the justices of peace for that purpose, or even in any public prison; and that every such man was from that time to be deemed a listed soldier, and not to be taken out of his majesty's service by any process, other than for some criminal matter. Nothing could more plainly show either the zeal of the Parliament for a vigorous prosecution of the war, or their confidence in the justice and moderation of our ministry, than their agreeing to this act, which was to continue in force till the end of the next session; and which, in the hands of a wicked and enterprising administration, might have been made such a use of, as would have been inconsistent with that security which is provided by our happy constitution for the liberty of the subject.

ACT FOR RAISING A REGIMENT OF FOOT IN NORTH AMERICA.

The next object of the immediate attention of Parliament in this session was the raising of a new regiment of foot in North America; for which purpose the sum of eighty-one thousand one hundred and seventy-eight pounds, sixteen shillings, to which the estimate thereof amounted, was voted. This regiment, which was to consist of four battalions of a thousand men each, was intended to be raised chiefly out of the Germans and Swiss, who, for many years past, had annually transported themselves in great numbers to the British plantations in America, where waste lands had been assigned them upon the frontiers of the provinces; but, very injudiciously, no care had been taken to intermix them with the English inhabitants of the place. To this circumstance it is owing, that they have continued to correspond and converse only with one another; so that very few of them, even of those who have been born there, have yet learned to speak or understand the

English tongue. However, as they were all zealous Protestants, and in general strong hardy men, and accustomed to the climate, it was judged that a regiment of good and faithful soldiers might be raised out of them, particularly proper to oppose the French; but to this end it was necessary to appoint some officers, especially subalterns, who understood military discipline, and could speak the German language; and as a sufficient number of such could not be found among the English officers, it was necessary to bring over and grant commissions to several German and Swiss officers and engineers; but as this step, by the act of settlement, could not be taken without the authority of Parliament, an act was now passed for enabling his majesty to grant commissions to a certain number of foreign Protestants, who had served abroad as officers or engineers, to act and rank as officers or engineers in America only. An act was likewise passed in this session, strictly forbidding, under pain of death, any of his majesty's subjects to serve as officers under the French king, or to inlist as soldiers in his service, without his majesty's previous licence; and also for obliging such of his majesty's subjects as should, in time to come, accept of commissions in the Scotch brigade in the Dutch service, to take the oaths of allegiance and abjuration, on pain of forfeiting five hundred pounds.

MARITIME LAWS OF ENGLAND EXTENDED TO AMERICA.

As it had been resolved, in the beginning of the preceding summer, to build vessels of force upon the lake Ontario, an act was now passed for extending the maritime laws of England, relating to the government of his majesty's ships and forces by sea, to such officers, seamen, and others, as should serve on board his majesty's ships or vessels employed upon the lakes, great waters, or rivers in North America; and also, but not without

opposition to this last, for the better recruiting of his majesty's forces upon the Continent of America: to which end, by a new clause now added to a former act, a recruiting officer was empowered to inlist and detain an indented servant, even though his master should reclaim him, upon paying to the master such a sum as two justices of peace, within the precinct, should adjudge to be a reasonable equivalent for the original purchase-money, and the remaining time such servant might have to serve.

QUIET OF IRELAND RESTORED.

The intestine broils of Ireland were happily composed this year by the prudent management of the Marquis of Hartington, lord-lieutenant of that kingdom. By his steady and disinterested conduct, his candour and humanity, the Irish were not only brought to a much better temper, even among themselves, than they were before their late outrageous riots and dangerous dissensions happened; but also prevailed upon to acquiesce in the measures of England, without this last being obliged to give up any one point of her superiority. The leading men in the Parliament of Ireland were the first that conformed; and though the ferment continued very high for some time after, among the middling and lower ranks of people, it was at length entirely allayed by the wisdom of the lord-lieutenant, and the excellent law which he encouraged and passed for the benefit of that nation[y]. The P——— of Ireland, who had been very

[y] Among other objects of the attention of the legislature of that country, ten thousand pounds were granted for making the river Nore navigable from the city of Kilkenny to the town of Innestalge; twenty thousand pounds towards carrying on an inland navigation from the city of Dublin to the river Shannon; four thousand pounds for making the river Newry navigable; a thousand pounds a year for two years, for the encouragement of English protestant schools; several sums, to be distributed in premiums, for the encouragement of the cambric, hempen, and flaxen manufactures; and three hundred thousand pounds to his majesty, towards supporting the several branches of the establishment, and for defraying the expenses of the government for two years.

busy in fomenting many of the late disturbances, was, by his majesty's command, struck off the list of privy-counsellors; and the greatest part of those patriots, whom faction had turned out of their employments there, were reinstated with honour.

TREATY CONCLUDED WITH PRUSSIA.

The Parliament of England, which had adjourned on the twenty-third of December, met again: the House of Commons on the thirteenth of January, and the Lords on the nineteenth. On the sixteenth of the same month, the treaty between his Britannic majesty and the King of Prussia was signed, importing, that, for the defence of their common country, Germany, and in order to preserve her peace and tranquillity, which it was feared was in danger of being disturbed, on account of the disputes in America, the two kings, for that end only, entered into a convention of neutrality, by which they reciprocally bound themselves not to suffer foreign troops of any nation whatsoever to enter into Germany, or pass through it during the troubles aforesaid, and the consequences that might result from them; but to oppose the same with their utmost might, in order to secure Germany from the calamities of war, maintain her fundamental laws and constitutions, and preserve her peace uninterrupted. Thus, the late treaty with Russia was virtually renounced. Their majesties, moreover, seized this favourable opportunity to adjust the differences that had subsisted between them, in relation to the remainder of the Silesia loan, due to the subjects of his Britannic majesty, and the indemnification claimed by the subjects of his Prussian majesty for their losses by sea during the late war; so that the attachment laid on the said debt was agreed to be taken off, as soon as the ratification of this treaty should be exchanged.

NEW MILITIA BILL PASSED BY THE COMMONS, BUT REJECTED BY THE LORDS.

On the twenty-first of January the House took into consideration the laws then in being relating to the militia of this kingdom; and finding them insufficient, ordered a new bill to be prepared and brought in, for the better regulating of the militia forces in the several counties of England. A bill was accordingly prepared to that effect, and presented to the House on the twelfth of March by the Hon. Charles Townshend, Esq. who, to his honour, was one of the chief promoters of it. After receiving many amendments in the House of Commons, it was on the tenth of May passed, and sent to the Lords; but several objections being made to it by some of the peers, and it seeming to them that some further amendments were still necessary, which they thought they could not in that session spare time to consider so maturely as the importance of the subject required, a negative of fifty-nine against twenty-three was put upon the motion for passing the bill; though every one must have been sensible, not only of the propriety, but even of the absolute necessity of such a law, which was ardently desired by the whole nation.

SESSION CLOSED.

On the twenty-seventh of May his majesty went to the House of Peers, and, after having given the royal assent to the bills then depending, thanked his Parliament, in a speech from the throne, for their vigorous and effectual support. He acquainted them, that the injuries and hostilities which had been for some time committed by the French against his dominions and subjects were then followed by the actual invasion of

the island of Minorca, though guaranteed to him by all the great powers in Europe, and particularly by the French king; that he had, therefore, found himself obliged, in vindication of the honour of his crown, and of the rights of his people, to declare war in form against France; and that he relied on the divine protection, and the vigorous assistance of his faithful subjects, in so just a cause. The Parliament was then adjourned to the eighteenth of June, and from thence afterwards to the eighteenth of July, and then it was prorogued.

CHAPTER XXV.

Letter from M. Rouillé to the Secretary of State.—The two Nations recriminate on each other.—The French threaten Great Britain with an Invasion.—Requisition of Six Thousand Dutch Troops according to Treaty.—Message from the King to the Parliament.—A Body of Hessians and Hanoverians transported into England.—French Preparations at Toulon.—Admiral Byng sails for the Mediterranean.—He arrives at Gibraltar.—Engages M. de la Galissonniere off Minorca.—And returns to Gibraltar.—Ferment of the People at Home.—Admiral Byng superseded, and sent Home Prisoner.—Account of the Siege of St. Philip's Fort, in Minorca.—Precautions taken by General Blakeney.—Siege commenced.—English Squadron appears.—General Attack of the Works.—The Garrison capitulates.—Sir Edward Hawke sails to Minorca.—Rejoicings in France, and Clamours in England.—Gallantry of Fortunatus Wright.—General Blakeney created a Baron.—Measures taken for the Defence of Great Britain.—Proclamation.—Earl of Loudoun appointed Commander-in-chief in America.—His Britannic Majesty's Declaration of War.—Substance of the French King's Declaration.—Address of the City of London.—Trial of General Fowke.—Affairs of America.—Colonel Bradstreet defeats a Body of French on the River Onondaga.—Earl of Loudoun arrives at New York.—Oswego reduced by the Enemy.—Further Proceedings in America.—Naval Operations in that Country.—Transactions in the East Indies.—Calcutta besieged by the Viceroy of Bengal.—Deplorable Fate of those who perished in the Dungeon there.—Additional Cruelties exercised on Mr. Holwell.—Resolution against Angria.—Fort of Geria taken by Admiral Watson and Mr. Clive.—Their subsequent Proceedings in the River Ganges.

LETTER FROM M. ROUILLE TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE.

In the month of January Mr. Fox, lately appointed secretary of state, received a letter from M. Rouillé, minister and secretary of state for foreign affairs to the King of France, expostulating in the name of his sove-

reign upon the orders and instructions for committing hostilities, which his Britannic majesty had given to General Braddock and Admiral Boscawen, in diametrical opposition to the most solemn assurances so often repeated by word of mouth as well as in writing. He complained of the insult which had been offered to his master's flag in attacking and taking two of his ships in the open sea, without any previous declaration of war; as also by committing depredations on the commerce of his most christian majesty's subjects, in contempt of the law of nations, the faith of treaties, and the usages established among civilized nations. He said, the sentiments and character of his Britannic majesty gave the king his master room to expect that at his return to London he would disavow the conduct of his Admiralty; but seeing that, instead of punishing, he rather encouraged those who had been guilty of such depredations, his most christian majesty would be deemed deficient in what he owed to his own glory, the dignity of his crown, and the defence of his people, if he deferred any longer demanding a signal reparation for the outrage done to the French flag, and the damage sustained by his subjects. He, therefore, demanded immediate and full restitution of all the French ships which, contrary to law and decorum, had been taken by the English navy, together with the officers, soldiers, mariners, guns, stores, and merchandize. He declared, that should this restitution be made, he should be willing to engage in a negotiation for what further satisfaction he might claim, and continue desirous to see the differences relating to America determined by a solid and equitable accommodation; but if, contrary to all hopes, these demands should be rejected, he would consider such a denial of justice as the most authentic declaration of war, and as a formed design in the court of London to disturb the peace of Europe. To this peremptory remonstrance the British secretary was di-

rected to answer, that though the King of England would readily consent to an equitable and solid accommodation, he would not comply with the demand of immediate and full restitution as a preliminary condition; for his majesty had taken no steps but such as were rendered just and indispensable by the hostilities which the French began in time of profound peace, and a proper regard for his own honour, the rights and possessions of his crown, and the security of his kingdoms.

Without all doubt the late transactions had afforded specious arguments for both nations to impeach the conduct of each other. The French court, conscious of their encroachments in Nova Scotia, affected to draw a shade over these, as particulars belonging to a disputed territory, and to divert the attention to the banks of the Ohio, where Jamonville and his detachment had been attacked and massacred by the English, without the least provocation. They likewise inveighed against the capture of their ships before any declaration of war, as flagrant acts of piracy; and some neutral powers of Europe seemed to consider them in the same point of view. It was certainly high time to check the insolence of the French by force of arms, and surely this might have been as effectually and expeditiously exerted under the usual sanction of a formal declaration; the omission of which exposed the administration to the censure of our neighbours, and fixed the imputation of fraud and freebooting on the beginning of the war. The ministry was said to have delayed the ceremony of denouncing war from political considerations, supposing that, should the French be provoked into the first declaration of this kind, the powers of Europe would consider his most christian majesty as the aggressor, and Great Britain would reap all the fruits of the defensive alliances in which she had engaged. But nothing could be more weak and frivolous than such a conjecture. The aggressor is he who first violates the peace; and every

ally will interpret the aggression according to his own interest and convenience. The administration maintained the appearance of candour in the midst of their hostilities. The merchant ships, of which a great number had been taken from the French, were not sold and divided among the captors, according to the practice of war; but carefully sequestered, with all their cargoes and effects, in order to be restored to their right owners, in case the disputes between the two nations should not be productive of an open rupture. In this particular, however, it was pity that a little common sense had not been blended with their honourable intention. Great part of the cargoes consisted of fish, and other perishable commodities, which were left to rot and putrefy, and afterwards thrown overboard to prevent contagion, so that the owners and captors were equally disappointed, and the value of them lost to both nations.

THE FRENCH THREATEN GREAT BRITAIN WITH AN INVASION.

The court of Versailles, while they presented remonstrances which they knew would prove ineffectual, and exclaimed against the conduct of Great Britain with all the arts of calumny and exaggeration at every court in Christendom, continued nevertheless to make such preparations as denoted a design to prosecute the war with uncommon vigour. They began to repair and fortify Dunkirk: orders were published that all British subjects should quit the dominions of France: many English vessels were seized in the different ports of that kingdom, and their crews sent to prison. At the same time an edict was issued, inviting the French subjects to equip privateers, offering a premium of forty livres for every gun, and as much for every man they should take from the enemy; and promising that, in case a peace should be speedily concluded, the king would pur-

chase the privateers at prime cost. They employed great numbers of artificers and seamen in equipping a formidable squadron of ships at Brest; and assembling a strong body of land forces, as well as a considerable number of transports, threatened the island of Great Britain with a dangerous invasion.

REQUISITION OF SIX THOUSAND DUTCH TROOPS ACCORDING TO TREATY.

The English people were seized with consternation: the ministry were alarmed and perplexed. Colonel Yorke, the British resident at the Hague, was ordered by his majesty to make requisition of the six thousand men whom the States-General are obliged by treaty to furnish, when Great Britain shall be threatened with an invasion; and in February he presented a memorial for this purpose. Monsieur d'Affry, the French king's minister at the Hague, having received intimation of this demand, produced a counter-memorial from his master, charging the English as the aggressors, and giving the States-General plainly to understand, that, should they grant the succours demanded by Great Britain, he would consider their compliance as an act of hostility against himself. The Dutch, though divided among themselves by faction, were unanimously averse to any measure that might involve them in the approaching war. Their commerce was in a great measure decayed, and their finances were too much exhausted to admit of an immediate augmentation of their forces, which for many other reasons they strove to avoid. They foresaw a great increase of trade in their adhering to a punctual neutrality: they were afraid of the French by land, and jealous of the English by sea; and, perhaps, enjoyed the prospect of seeing these two proud and powerful nations humble and impoverish each other. Certain it is, the States-General protracted their answer to Mr.

Yorke's memorial by such affected delays, that the court of London perceived their intention, and, in order to avoid the mortification of a flat denial, the king ordered his resident to acquaint the princess regent, that he would not insist upon his demand. The states, thus freed from their perplexity, at length delivered an answer to Mr. Yorke, in which they expatiated on the difficulties they were laid under, and thanked his Britannic majesty for having freed them by his declaration from that embarrassment into which they were thrown by his first demand and the counter-memorial of the French minister. The real sentiments of those people, however, more plainly appeared in the previous resolution delivered to the states of Holland by the towns of Amsterdam, Dort, Haerlem, Gouda, Rotterdam, and Enckhuysen, declaring flatly that England was uncontrovertibly the aggressor in Europe, by seizing a considerable number of French vessels; that the threatened invasion of Great Britain did not affect the republic's guarantee of the protestant succession, inasmuch as it was only intended to obtain reparation for the injury sustained by the subjects of his most christian majesty; finally, that the succours demanded could be of no advantage to the King of England; as it appeared by the declaration of his most christian majesty, that their granting these succours would immediately lay them under a necessity of demanding, in their turn, assistance from Great Britain. From this way of arguing, the English may perceive what they have to expect in cases of emergency from the friendship of their nearest allies, who must always be furnished with the same excuse, whenever they find it convenient or necessary to their own interest. Such a consideration, joined to other concurring motives, ought to induce the British legislature to withdraw its dependence from all foreign connexions, and provide such a constitutional force within itself, as will be fully sufficient to baffle all the

efforts of an external enemy. The apprehensions and distraction of the people at this juncture plainly evinced the expediency of such a national force; but different parties were divided in their opinions about the nature of such a provision. Some of the warmest friends of their country proposed a well regulated militia, as an institution that would effectually answer the purpose of defending a wide extended sea-coast from invasion; while, on the other hand, this proposal was ridiculed and refuted as impracticable or useless by all the retainers to the court, and all the officers of the standing army. In the mean time, as the experiment could not be immediately tried, and the present juncture demanded some instant determination, recourse was had to a foreign remedy.

Towards the latter end of March, the king sent a written message to Parliament, intimating, that he had received repeated advices, from different persons and places, that a design had been formed by the French court to invade Great Britain or Ireland; and the great preparations of forces, ships, artillery, and warlike stores, then notoriously making in the ports of France opposite to the British coasts, together with the language of the French ministers in some foreign courts, left little room to doubt the reality of such a design: that his majesty had augmented his forces both by sea and land, and taken proper measures and precautions for putting his kingdom in a posture of defence: that, in order further to strengthen himself, he had made a requisition of a body of Hessian troops, pursuant to the late treaty, to be forthwith brought over, and for that purpose ordered transports to be prepared; that he doubted not of being enabled and supported by his Parliament in taking such measures as might be conducive to an end so essential to the honour of his crown, the preservation of the protestant religion, and the laws and liberties of these kingdoms. This message was no

sooner received, than both Houses voted, composed, and presented, very warm and affectionate addresses, in which his majesty was thanked for the requisition he had made of the Hessian troops; a measure which, at any other time, would have been stigmatized with all the satire and rhetoric of the opposition.

A BODY OF HESSIANS AND HANOVERIANS TRANSPORTED INTO ENGLAND.

Even this precaution was not thought sufficient to secure the island, and quiet the terrors of the people. In a few days Mr. Fox, the new minister, encouraged by the unanimity which had appeared so conspicuous in the motions for the late addresses, ventured to move again, in the House of Commons, that another address should be presented to the king, beseeching his majesty, that for the more effectual defence of this island, and for the better security of the religion and liberties of his subjects, against the threatened attack by a foreign enemy, he would be graciously pleased to order twelve battalions of his electoral troops, together with the usual detachment of artillery, to be forthwith brought into this kingdom. There was a considerable party in the House to whom such a motion was odious and detestable: but, considering the critical situation of affairs, they were afraid that a direct opposition might expose them to a more odious suspicion: they, therefore, moved for the order of the day, and insisted on the question's being put upon that motion; but it was carried in the negative by a considerable majority, which also agreed to the other proposal. The resolution of the House was communicated to the Lords, who unanimously concurred; and their joint address being presented, his majesty assured them he would immediately comply with their request. Accordingly, such expedition was used, that in the course of the next month both Hano-

verians and Hessians arrived in England, and encamped in different parts of the kingdom.—As the fears of an invasion subsided in the minds of the people, their antipathy to these foreign auxiliaries emerged. They were beheld with the eyes of jealousy, suspicion, and disdain. They were treated with contempt, reserve, and rigour. The ministry was execrated for having reduced the nation to such a low circumstance of disgrace, as that they should owe their security to German mercenaries. There were not wanting some incendiaries, who circulated hints and insinuations, that the kingdom had been purposely left unprovided; and that the natives of South Britain had been formerly subdued and expelled by a body of Saxon auxiliaries, whom they had hired for their preservation. In a word, the doubts and suspicions of a people naturally blunt and jealous were inflamed to such a degree of animosity, that nothing would have restrained them from violent acts of outrage, but the most orderly, modest, and inoffensive behaviour by which both the Hanoverians and Hessians were distinguished.

FRENCH PREPARATIONS AT TOULON.

Under the cloak of an invading armament, which engrossed the attention of the British nation, the French were actually employed in preparations for an expedition, which succeeded according to their wish. In the beginning of the year, advice was received that a French squadron would soon be in a condition to sail from Toulon: this was afterwards confirmed by repeated intelligence, not only from foreign gazettes, but also from English ministers and consuls residing in Spain and Italy. They affirmed that the Toulon squadron consisted of twelve or fifteen ships of the line, with a great number of transports; that they were supplied with provisions for two months only, consequently could

not be intended for America; and that strong bodies of troops were on their march from different parts of the French dominions to Dauphiné and Provence in order to be embarked. Notwithstanding these particulars of information, which plainly pointed out Minorca as the object of their expedition; notwithstanding the extensive and important commerce carried on by the subjects of Great Britain in the Mediterranean; no care was taken to send thither a squadron of ships capable to protect the trade, and frustrate the designs of the enemy. That great province was left to a few inconsiderable ships and frigates, which could serve no other purpose than that of carrying intelligence from port to port, and enriching their commanders by making prize of merchant vessels. Nay, the ministry seemed to pay little or no regard to the remonstrance of General Blakeney, deputy-governor of Minorca, who, in repeated advices, represented the weakness of the garrison which he commanded in St. Philip's castle, the chief fortress on the island. Far from strengthening the garrison with a proper reinforcement, they did not even send thither the officers belonging to it who were in England upon leave of absence, nor give directions for any vessel to transport them, until the French armament was ready to make a descent upon that island[w].

ADMIRAL BYNG SAILS FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN.

At length, the destination of the enemy's fleet being universally known, the ministry seemed to rouse from their lethargy, and, like persons suddenly waking, acted with hurry and precipitation. Instead of detaching a squadron that in all respects should be superior to the French fleet in the Mediterranean, and bestowing the command of it upon an officer of approved courage and

[w] See note [H], vol. vi.

activity, they allotted no more than ten ships of the line for this service, vesting the command of them in Admiral Byng, who had never met with any occasion to signalize his courage, and whose character was not very popular in the navy: but Mr. West, the second in command, was a gentleman universally respected for his probity, ability, and resolution. The ten ships destined for this expedition were but in very indifferent order, poorly manned, and unprovided with either hospital or fire-ship. They sailed from Spithead on the seventh day of April, having on board, as part of their complement, a regiment of soldiers to be landed at Gibraltar, with Major-General Stuart, Lord Effingham, and Colonel Cornwallis, whose regiments were in garrison at Minorca; about forty inferior officers, and near one hundred recruits, as a reinforcement to St. Philip's fortress.

ADMIRAL BYNG ARRIVES AT GIBRALTAR.

After all the intelligence which had been received, one would imagine the government of England was still ignorant of the enemy's force and destination; for the instructions delivered to Admiral Byng imported, that, on his arrival at Gibraltar, he should inquire whether any French squadron had passed through the straits; and that, being certified in the affirmative, as it was probably designed for North America, he should immediately detach Rear-Admiral West to Louisbourg, on the island of Cape-Breton, with such a number of ships as, when joined with those at Halifax, would constitute a force superior to the armament of the enemy. On the second day of May, Admiral Byng arrived at Gibraltar, where he found Captain Edgecumbe, with the Princess Louisa ship of war, and a sloop, who informed him that the French armament, commanded by M. de la Galissonniere, consisting of thirteen ships of

the line, with a great number of transports, having on board a body of fifteen thousand land forces, had sailed from Toulon on the tenth day of April, and made a descent upon the island of Minorca, from whence he (Captain Edgecumbe) had been obliged to retire at their approach. General Fowke, who commanded at Gibraltar, had received two successive orders from the secretary at war, with respect to his sparing a battalion of troops to be transported by Mr. Byng, as a reinforcement to Minorca; but as the two orders appeared inconsistent or equivocal, a council of war was consulted, and the majority were of opinion that no troops should be sent from thence to Minorca, except a detachment to supply the deficiency in the little squadron of Captain Edgecumbe, who had left a good number of his seamen and marines under the command of Captain Scroop, to assist in the defence of Fort St. Philip's. These articles of intelligence the admiral despatched by an express to the lords of the Admiralty, and in his letter made use of some impolitic expressions, which, in all probability, it would have been well for him had he omitted. He said, if he had been so happy as to have arrived at Mahon before the French had landed, he flattered himself he should have been able to prevent their getting a footing on that island. He complained, that there were no magazines in Gibraltar for supplying the squadron with necessaries; that the careening wharfs, pits, and store-houses were entirely decayed, so that he should find the greatest difficulty in cleaning the ships that were foul; and this was the case with some of those he carried out from England, as well as with those which had been for some time cruising in the Mediterranean. He signified his opinion, that, even if it should be found practicable, it would be very impolitic to throw any men into St. Philip's castle, which could not be saved without a land force sufficient to raise the siege; therefore, a small reinforcement would

only add so many men to the number which must fall into the hands of the enemy. He observed, that such engineers and artillery-men in Gibraltar as had been at Minorca, were of opinion, that it would be impossible to throw any number of men into St. Philip's, if the French had erected batteries on the two shores near the entrance of the harbour, so as to bar all passage up to the sally-port of the fortress; and with this opinion he signified the concurrence of his own sentiments. The first part of this letter was downright impeachment of the ministry, for having delayed the expedition, for having sent out ships unfit for service, and for having neglected the magazines and wharfs at Gibraltar. In the latter part he seemed to prepare them for the subsequent account of his misconduct and miscarriage. It cannot be supposed that they underwent this accusation without apprehension and resentment: and as they foresaw the loss of Minorca, which would not fail to excite a national clamour, perhaps they now began to take measures for gratifying their resentment, and transferring the blame from themselves to the person who had presumed to hint a disapprobation of their conduct; for this purpose they could not have found a fairer opportunity than Mr. Byng's subsequent behaviour afforded.

ADMIRAL BYNG ENGAGES M. DE LA GALISSONNIERE OFF MINORCA.

The admiral being strengthened by Mr. Edgecumbe, and reinforced by a detachment from the garrison, set sail from Gibraltar on the eighth day of May, and was joined off Majorca by his majesty's ship the Phœnix, under the command of Captain Hervey, who confirmed the intelligence he had already received, touching the strength and destination of the French squadron. When he approached Minorca, he descried the British colours

still flying at the castle of St. Philip's, and several bomb batteries playing upon it from different quarters where the French banners were displayed. Thus informed, he detached three ships a-head, with Captain Hervey, to reconnoitre the harbour's mouth, and land, if possible, a letter for General Blakeney, giving him to understand the fleet was come to his assistance. Before this attempt could be made, the French fleet appearing to the south-east, and the wind blowing strong off shore, he recalled his ships, and formed the line of battle. About six o'clock in the evening, the enemy, to the number of seventeen ships, thirteen of which appeared to be very large, advanced in order; but about seven tacked, with a view to gain the weather-gage. Mr. Byng, in order to preserve that advantage, as well as to make sure of the land wind in the morning, followed their example, being then about five leagues from Cape Mola. At daylight the enemy could not be descried; but two tartanes appearing close to the rear of the English squadron, they were immediately chased by signal. One escaped, and the other being taken, was found to have on board two French captains, two lieutenants, and about one hundred private soldiers, part of six hundred who had been sent out in tartanes the preceding day, to reinforce the enemy's squadron. This soon reappearing, the line of battle was formed on each side, and about two o'clock Admiral Byng threw out a signal to bear away two points from the wind and engage. At this time his distance from the enemy was so great, that Rear-Admiral West, perceiving it impossible to comply with both orders, bore away with his division seven points from the wind, and closing down upon the enemy, attacked them with such impetuosity, that the ships which opposed him were in a little time driven out of the line. Had he been properly sustained by the van, in all probability the British fleet would have obtained a complete victory; but the other

division did not bear down, and the enemy's centre keeping that station, Rear-Admiral West could not pursue his advantage without running the risk of seeing his communication with the rest of the line entirely cut off. In the beginning of the action, the Intrepid, in Mr. Byng's division, was so disabled in her rigging, that she could not be managed, and drove on the ship that was next in position; a circumstance which obliged several others to throw all a-back, in order to avoid confusion, and for some time retarded the action. Certain it is, that Mr. Byng, though accommodated with a noble ship of ninety guns, made little or no use of his artillery, but kept aloof, either from an over-strained observance of discipline, or timidity. When his captain exhorted him to bear down upon the enemy, he very coolly replied, that he would avoid the error of Admiral Matthews, who, in his engagement with the French and Spanish squadrons off Toulon, during the preceding war, had broke the line by his own precipitation, and exposed himself singly to a fire that he could not sustain. Mr. Byng, on the contrary, was determined against acting, except with the line entire; and, on pretence of rectifying this disorder, which had happened among some of the ships, hesitated so long, and kept at such a wary distance, that he never was properly engaged, though he received some few shots in his hull. M. de la Galissonniere seemed equally averse to the continuance of the battle; part of his squadron had been fairly obliged to quit the line; and though he was rather superior to the English in number of men and weight of metal, he did not choose to abide the consequence of a closer fight with an enemy so expert in naval operation: he, therefore, took advantage of Mr. Byng's hesitation, and edged away with an easy sail to join his van, which had been discomfited. The English admiral gave chase; but the French ships being clean, he could not come up and close them

again; so they retired at their leisure. Then he put his squadron on the other tack, in order to keep the wind of the enemy; and next morning they were altogether out of sight.

While he lay-to with the rest of his fleet, at the distance of ten leagues from Mahon, he detached cruisers to look for some missing ships, which joined him accordingly, and made an inquiry into the condition of the squadron. The number of killed amounted to forty-two, including Captain Andrews, of the Defiance; and about one hundred and sixty-eight were wounded. Three of the capital ships were so damaged in their masts, that they could not keep the sea, with any regard to their safety; a great number of the seamen were ill, and there was no vessel which could be converted into an hospital for the sick and wounded. In this situation Mr. Byng called a council of war, at which the land officers were present. He represented to them, that he was much inferior to the enemy in weight of metal and number of men; that they had the advantage of sending their wounded to Minorca, from whence at the same time they were refreshed and reinforced occasionally; that, in his opinion, it was impracticable to relieve St. Philip's fort, and, therefore, they ought to make the best of their way back to Gibraltar, which might require immediate protection. They unanimously concurred with his sentiments, and thither he directed his course accordingly. How he came to be so well acquainted with the impracticability of relieving General Blakeney, it is not easy to determine, as no experiment was made for that purpose. Indeed, the neglect of such a trial seems to have been the least excusable part of his conduct; for it afterwards appeared, that the officers and soldiers belonging to the garrison might have been landed at the sally-port, without running any great risk; and a gentle-

man, then in the fort, actually passed and repassed in a boat, unhurt by any of the enemy's batteries.

Mr. Byng's letter to the Admiralty, containing a detail of the action, is said to have arrived some days before it was made public; and when it appeared, was curtailed of divers expressions, and whole paragraphs, which either tended to his own justification, or implied a censure on the conduct of his superiors. Whatever use might have been made of his letter while it remained a secret to the public, we shall not pretend to explain: but sure it is, that on the sixteenth day of June, Sir Edward Hawke and Admiral Saunders sailed from Spithead to Gibraltar, to supersede the Admirals Byng and West, in their commands of the Mediterranean squadron; and Mr. Byng's letter was not published till the twenty-sixth day of the same month, when it produced all the effect which that gentleman's bitterest enemies could have desired. The populace took fire like a train of the most hasty combustibles, and broke out into such a clamour of rage and indignation against the devoted admiral, as could not have been exceeded if he had lost the whole navy of England, and left the coasts of the kingdom naked to invasion. This animosity was carefully fomented and maintained by artful emissaries, who mingled with all public assemblies, from the drawing-room at St. James's to the mob at Charing-cross. They expatiated upon the insolence, the folly, the cowardice, and misconduct of the unhappy admiral. They even presumed to make their sovereign in some measure an instrument of their calumny, by suggesting, that his majesty had prognosticated Byng's misbehaviour from the contents of his first letter, dated at Gibraltar. They ridiculed and refuted the reasons he had given for returning to that fortress, after his scandalous rencounter with the French squadron; and, in order to exasperate them to the most

implacable resentment, they exaggerated the terrible consequences of losing Minorca, which must now be subdued through his treachery or want of resolution. In a word, he was devoted as the scapegoat of the ministry, to whose supine negligence, ignorance, and misconduct, the loss of that important fortress was undoubtedly owing. Byng's miscarriage was thrown out like a barrel to the whale, in order to engage the attention of the people, that it might not be attracted by the real cause of the national misfortune. In order to keep up the flame which had been kindled against the admiral, recourse was had to the lowest artifices. Agents were employed to vilify his person in all public places of vulgar resort; and mobs were hired at different parts of the capital, to hang and burn him in effigy.

ADMIRAL BYNG SUPERSEDED AND SENT HOME PRISONER.

The two officers who succeeded to the command in the Mediterranean were accompanied by Lord Tyrawley, whom his majesty had appointed to supersede General Fowke in the government of Gibraltar, that gentleman having incurred the displeasure of the ministry for not having understood an order which was unintelligible. By the same conveyance, a letter from the secretary to the Admiralty was transmitted to Mr. Byng, giving him notice that he was recalled. To this intimation he replied in such a manner as denoted a consciousness of having done his duty, and a laudable desire to vindicate his own conduct. His answer contained a further account of the engagement in which he was supposed to have misbehaved, intermixed with some puerile calculations of the enemy's superiority in weight of metal, which served no other purpose than that of exposing his character

still more to ridicule and abuse; and he was again so impolitic as to hazard certain expressions, which added fresh fuel to the resentment of his enemies. Directions were immediately despatched to Sir Edward Hawke, that Byng should be sent home in arrest; and an order to the same purport was lodged at every port in the kingdom: precautions which, however unnecessary to secure the person of a man who longed ardently to justify his character by a public trial, were yet productive of considerable effect in augmenting the popular odium. Admiral Byng immediately embarked in the ship which had carried out his successor, and was accompanied by Mr. West, General Fowke, and several other officers of that garrison, who were also recalled, in consequence of having subscribed to the result of the council of war, which we have mentioned above. When they arrived in England, Mr. West met with such a gracious reception from his majesty as was thought due to his extraordinary merit; but Mr. Byng was committed close prisoner in an apartment of Greenwich hospital.

ACCOUNT OF THE SIEGE OF ST. PHILIP'S FORT IN MINORCA.

In the mean time, the siege of St. Philip's fort in Minorca was prosecuted with unremitting vigour. The armament of Toulon, consisting of the fleet commanded by M. de la Galissonniere, and the troops under the Duke de Richelieu, arrived on the eighteenth day of April at the port of Ciudadella, on that part of the island opposite to Mahon, or St. Philip's, and immediately began to disembark their forces. Two days before they reached the island, General Blakeney had, by a packet-boat, received certain intelligence of their approach, and began to make preparations for the defence of the castle. The fort which he commanded

was very extensive, surrounded with numerous redoubts, ravelins, and other outworks; and provided with subterranean galleries, mines, and traverses, cut out of the solid rock with incredible labour. Upon the whole, this was one of the best fortified places in Europe, well supplied with artillery, ammunition, and provision; and, without all doubt, might have sustained the most desperate siege, had it been defended by a numerous garrison, conducted by able engineers, under the eye and auspices of an active and skilful commander. All these advantages, however, did not occur on this occasion. The number of troops in Minorca did not exceed four regiments, whereas the nature of the works required at least double the number; and, even of these, above forty officers were absent. The chief engineer was rendered lame by the gout, and the general himself oppressed with the infirmities of old age. The natives of the island might have been serviceable as pioneers, or day labourers, but, from their hatred to the protestant religion, they were generally averse to the English government, although they had lived happily and grown wealthy under its influence.

PRECAUTIONS TAKEN BY GEN. BLAKENEY.

The governor ordered his officers to beat up for volunteers in the adjacent town of St. Philip's; but few or none would enlist under his banners, and it seems he would not venture to compel them into the service. He recalled all his advanced parties; and, in particular, a company posted at Fornelles, where a small redoubt had been raised, and five companies at Ciudadella, a post fortified with two pieces of cannon, which were now withdrawn as soon as the enemy began to disembark their forces. At the same time Major Cunningham was detached with a party to break down the bridges,

and break up the roads between that place and St. Philip's; but the task of destroying the roads could not be performed in such a hurry, on account of the hard rock which runs along the surface of the ground through this whole island; nor was there time to demolish the town of St. Philip's, which stood so near the fort, that the enemy could not fail to take advantage of its neighbourhood. The streets served them for trenches, which otherwise could not have been dug through the solid rock. Here they made a lodgement close to the works; here they found convenient barracks and quarters of refreshment, masks for their batteries, and an effectual cover for their mortars and bombardiers. The general has been blamed for leaving the town standing; but if we consider his uncertainty concerning the destination of the French armament, the odious nature of such a precaution, which could not fail to exasperate the inhabitants, and the impossibility of executing such a scheme after the first appearance of the enemy, he will be found excusable, if not altogether blameless. Some houses and windmills were actually demolished, so as to clear the esplanade and the approaches. All the wine in the cellars of St. Philip's town was destroyed, and the butts were carried into the castle, where they might serve for gabions and traverses. Five and twenty Minorquin bakers were hired, and a large number of cattle brought into the fort, for the benefit of the garrison. The ports were walled up, the posts assigned, the sentinels placed, and all the different guards appointed. Commodore Edgecumbe, who then anchored in the harbour of Mahon, close under the walls of the castle, sailed away with his little squadron, consisting of the Chesterfield, Princess Louisa, Portland, and Dolphin, after having left all his marines, a detachment from Gibraltar, the whole crew of the Porcupine sloop, and the greater part of the Dolphin's, as a reinforcement to the fort, under the immediate

direction and command of Captain Scroop, of the Dolphin, who, with great gallantry, offered himself for this severe duty, and bravely signalized himself during the whole siege. The French admiral might certainly have blocked up this harbour in such a manner as would have prevented the escape of these ships, and divers other rich merchant vessels which happened then to be at Mahon: but, in all probability, they purposely allowed them to abandon the place, which, on any emergency or assault, their crews and officers would have considerably reinforced. The enemy were perfectly acquainted with the great extent of the works, and the weakness of the garrison, from which circumstance they derived the most sanguine hopes that the place might be suddenly taken without the trouble of a regular siege. After Mr. Edgecumbe had sailed for Gibraltar, and General Blakeney had ordered a sloop to be sunk in the channel that leads to the harbour, the French squadron made its appearance at this part of the island; but, without having attempted any thing against the fort, fell to leeward of Cape Mola. Next day they came in sight again, but soon bore away, and never afterwards, during the whole course of the siege, approached so near as to give the garrison the least disturbance.

On the twenty-second day of April, the governor sent a drummer to the French general with a letter, desiring to know his reasons for invading the island. To this an answer was returned by the Duke de Richelieu, declaring he was come with intention to reduce the island under the dominion of his most christian majesty, by way of retaliation for the conduct of his master, who had seized and detained the ships belonging to the King of France and his subjects. If we may judge from the first operations of this nobleman, he was but indifferently provided with engineers; for, instead of beginning his approaches on the side of St.

Philip's town, close by the outworks, where he might have been screened from the fire of the garrison, his batteries were erected at Cape Mola, on the other side of the harbour, where they were more exposed, their fire much less effectual, and indeed at too great a distance to be of any service. The fire of St. Philip's was so severe, and the cannon so well served on this quarter, that in a little time the enemy thought proper to change their plan of attack, and advance on the side of St. Philip's town, which ought to have been the first object of their consideration, especially as they could find little or no earth to fill their gabions, and open their trenches in the usual form. On the twelfth of May, about nine at night, they opened two bomb batteries near the place where the windmills had been destroyed; and from that period an incessant fire was kept up on both sides, from mortars and cannon, the French continuing to raise new batteries in every situation from whence they could annoy the besieged.

On the seventeenth day of the month, the garrison were transported with joy at sight of the British squadron, commanded by Admiral Byng; and Mr. Boyd, commissary of the stores, ventured to embark in a small boat, with six oars, which passed from St. Stephen's Cove, a creek on the west side of the fortification, through a shower of cannon and musketry from the enemy's post on the other side, and actually reached the open sea, his design being to join the squadron; but this being at a great distance, stretching away to the southward, and Mr. Boyd perceiving himself chased by two of the enemy's light vessels, he returned by the same route to the garrison, without having sustained the least damage: a circumstance which plainly confutes the notion of Mr. Byng, that it was impracticable to open a communication with the garrison of St. Philip's. Next day the hopes of the besieged, which had prognosticated a naval victory to the British

squadron, a speedy relief to themselves, and no less than captivity to the assailants, were considerably damped by the appearance of the French fleet, which quietly returned to their station off the harbour of Mahon. That same evening they were told by a deserter that the English fleet had been worsted in an engagement by M. de la Galissonniere; and this information was soon confirmed by a general discharge, or *feu de joie,* through the whole French camp, to celebrate the victory they pretended to have obtained. How little soever they had reason to boast of any advantage in the action, the retreat of the English squadron was undoubtedly equivalent to a victory; for had Mr. Byng acquired and maintained the superiority at sea, the French forces, which had been disembarked in Minorca, would, in all probability, have been obliged to surrender prisoners of war to his Britannic majesty. The case was now much altered in their favour: their squadron cruised about the island without molestation: and they daily received, by means of their transports, reinforcements of men and ammunition, as well as constant supplies of provisions.

The English garrison, however mortified at finding themselves thus abandoned, resolved to acquit themselves with gallantry in the defence of the place, not without some remaining hope that the English squadron would be reinforced, and return to their relief. In the mean time, they sustained and retorted the enemy's fire with undaunted resolution. They remounted cannon, the carriages of which had been disabled: they removed them occasionally to places from whence it was judged they could do the greatest execution: they repaired breaches, restored merlons, and laboured with surprising alacrity, even when they were surrounded by the numerous batteries of the foe; when their embrasures, and even the parapets, were demolished, and they stood exposed not only to the cannon and mor-

tars, but also to the musketry, which fired upon them, without ceasing, from the windows of the houses in the town of St. Philip. By this time they were invested with an army of twenty thousand men, and plied incessantly from sixty-two battering cannon, twenty-one mortars, and four howitzers, besides the small arms: nevertheless, the loss of men within the fortress was very inconsiderable, the garrison being mostly secured in the subterranean works, which were impenetrable to shells or shot. By the twenty-seventh day of June they had made a practicable breach in one of the ravelins, and damaged the other outworks to such a degree, that they determined this night to give a general assault. Accordingly, between the hours of ten and eleven, they advanced to the attack from all quarters on the land side. At the same time a strong detachment, in armed boats, attempted to force the harbour, and penetrated into the creek, called St. Stephen's Cove, to storm Fort Charles, and second the attack upon Fort Marlborough, on the farther side of the creek, the most detached of all the outworks. The enemy advanced with great intrepidity, and their commander, the Duke de Richelieu, is said to have led them up to the works in person. Such an assault could not but be attended with great slaughter; they were mowed down, as they approached, with grape-shot and musketry; and several mines were sprung with great effect, so that the glacis was almost covered with the dying and the dead. Nevertheless, they persevered with uncommon resolution; and though repulsed on every other side, at length made a lodgement in the Queen's redoubt, which had been greatly damaged by their cannon. Whether their success in this quarter was owing to the weakness of the place, or the timidity of the defender, certain it is, the enemy were in possession before it was known to the officers of the garrison: for Lieutenant-Colonel Jeffries, the second in command, who had acquitted

himself since the beginning of the siege with equal courage, skill, and activity, in his visitation of this post, was suddenly surrounded and taken by a file of French grenadiers, at a time when he never dreamed they had made a lodgement. Major Cunningham, who accompanied him, met with a severer fate, though he escaped captivity: he was run through the arm with a bayonet, and the piece being discharged at the same time, shattered the bones of his hand in such a manner, that he was maimed for life. In this shocking condition he retired behind a traverse, and was carried home to his quarters. Thus the governor was deprived of his two principal assistants, one being taken, and the other disabled.

The enemy having made themselves masters of Anstruther's and the Queen's redoubts, from which perhaps they might have been dislodged, had a vigorous effort been made for that purpose, before they had leisure to secure themselves, the Duke de Richelieu ordered a parley to be beat, in order to obtain permission to bury the dead and remove the wounded. This request was granted with more humanity than discretion, inasmuch as the enemy took this opportunity to throw a reinforcement of men privately into the places where the lodgements had been made, and these penetrated into the gallery of the mines which communicated with all the other outworks. During this short cessation, General Blakeney summoned a council of war to deliberate upon the state of the fort and garrison; and the majority declared for a capitulation. The works were in many places ruined; the body of the castle was shattered; many guns were dismounted, the embrasures and parapets demolished, the palisadoes broke in pieces, the garrison exhausted with hard duty and incessant watching, and the enemy in possession of the subterranean communications. Besides, the governor had received information from prisoners, that

the Duke de Richelieu was alarmed by a report that the Marshal Duke de Belleisle would be sent to supersede him in the command, and for that reason would hazard another desperate assault, which it was the opinion of the majority the garrison could not sustain. These considerations, added to the despair of being relieved, induced him to demand a capitulation. But this measure was not taken with the unanimous consent of the council. Some officers observed, that the garrison was very little diminished, and still in good spirits: that no breach was made in the body of the castle, nor a single cannon erected to batter in breach: that the loss of an outwork was never deemed a sufficient reason for surrendering such a fortress: that the counterscarp was not yet taken, nor, on account of the rocky soil, could be taken, except by assault, which would cost the enemy a greater number than they had lost in their late attempt: that they could not attack the ditch, or batter in breach, before the counterscarp should be taken, and even then they must have recourse to galleries, before they could pass the fossé, which was furnished with mines and countermines: finally, they suggested, that in all probability the British squadron would be reinforced, and sail back to their relief; or, if it should not return, it was the duty of the governor to defend the place to extremity, without having any regard to the consequences. These remarks being overruled, the chamade was beat, a conference ensued, and very honourable conditions were granted to the garrison, in consideration of the gallant defence they had made. This, it must be owned, was vigorous while it lasted, as the French general was said to have lost five thousand men in the siege; whereas the loss of the garrison, which at first fell short of three thousand men, did not exceed one hundred. The capitulation imported, that the garrison should march out with all the honours of war, and be conveyed by sea to Gibraltar. The French

were put in possession of one gate, as well as Fort Charles and Marlborough redoubt; but the English troops remained in the other works till the seventh day of July, when they embarked. In the mean time reciprocal civilities passed between the commanders and officers of both nations.

SIR EDWARD HAWKE SAILS TO MINORCA.

The articles of capitulation were no sooner executed, than Monsieur de la Galissonniere sailed back to Toulon with all the prizes which had lain at anchor in the harbour of Mahon, since the fort of St. Philip was first invested. In all probability, the safety of himself and his whole squadron was owing to this expeditious retreat; for, in a few days after the surrender of the fort, Sir Edward Hawke's fleet, augmented by five ships of the line, which had been sent from England, when the first tidings arrived of Minorca's being invaded, now made its appearance off the island; but by this time Galissonniere was retired, and the English admiral had the mortification to see the French colours flying upon St. Philip's castle. What, perhaps, chagrined this gallant officer still more, he was not provided with frigates, sloops, and small craft to cruise round the island, and intercept the supplies which were daily sent to the enemy. Had he reached Minorca sooner, he might have discomfited the French squadron: but he could not have raised the siege of St. Philip's, because the Duke de Richelieu had received his reinforcements, and such a train of artillery as no fortification could long withstand. Indeed, if the garrison had been considerably reinforced, and the communication with it opened by sea, the defence would have been protracted, and so many vigorous sallies might have been made, that the assailants would have had cause to repent of their enterprise.

When the news of this conquest was brought to Ver-

sailles by the Count of Egmont, whom the Duke de Richelieu had despatched for that purpose, the people of France were transported with the most extravagant joy. Nothing was seen but triumphs and processions; nothing heard but anthems, congratulations, and hyperbolical encomiums upon the conqueror of Minorca, who was celebrated in a thousand poems and studied orations; while the conduct of the English was vilified and ridiculed in ballads, farces, and pasquinades. Nothing more argues the degeneracy of a warlike nation than the pride of such mean triumph for an advantage, which, in more vigorous times, would scarce have been distinguished by the ceremony of a *Te Deum laudamus*. Nor is this childish exultation, that disgraces the laurels of victory, confined to the kingdom of France. Truth obliges us to own, that even the subjects of Great Britain are apt to be elevated by success into an illiberal insolence of self-applause and contemptuous comparison. This must be condemned, as a proof of unmanly arrogance and absurd self-conceit, by all those who coolly reflect, that the events of war generally, if not always, depend upon the genius or misconduct of one individual. The loss of Minorca was severely felt in England as a national disgrace; but, instead of producing dejection and despondence, it excited an universal clamour of rage and resentment, not only against Mr. Byng, who had retreated from the French squadron, but also in reproach of the administration, which was taxed with having neglected the security of Minorca. Nay, some politicians were inflamed into a suspicion, that this important place had been negatively betrayed into the hands of the enemy, that, in case the arms of Great Britain should prosper in other parts of the world, the French king might have some sort of equivalent to restore for the conquests which should be abandoned at the peace. This notion, however, seems to have been conceived from prejudice and party, which now began

to appear with the most acrimonious aspect, not only throughout the united kingdoms in general, but even in the sovereign's councils.

GALLANTRY OF FORTUNATUS WRIGHT.

Sir Edward Hawke, being disappointed in his hope of encountering La Galissonniere, and relieving the English garrison of St. Philip's, at least asserted the empire of Great Britain in the Mediterranean, by annoying the commerce of the enemy, and blocking up the squadron in the harbour of Toulon. Understanding that the Austrian government at Leghorn had detained an English privateer, and imprisoned the captain, on pretence that he had violated the neutrality of the port, he detached two ships of war, to insist, in a peremptory manner, on the release of the ship, effects, crew, and captain; and they thought proper to comply with his demand, even without waiting for orders from the court of Vienna. The person in whose behalf the admiral thus interposed was one Fortunatus Wright, a native of Liverpool, who, though a stranger to a sea-life, had, in the last war, equipped a privateer, and distinguished himself in such a manner, by his uncommon vigilance and valour, that, if he had been indulged with a command suitable to his genius, he would have deserved as honourable a place in the annals of the navy, as that which the French have bestowed upon their boasted Guai Trouin, Du Bart, and Thurot. An uncommon exertion of spirit was the occasion of his being detained at this juncture. While he lay at anchor in the harbour of Leghorn, commander of the St. George privateer of Liverpool, a small ship of twelve guns and eighty men, a large French xebeque, mounted with sixteen cannon, and nearly three times the number of his complement, chose her station in view of the harbour, in order to interrupt the British commerce. The gal-

lant Wright could not endure this insult: notwithstanding the enemy's superiority in metal and number of men, he weighed anchor, hoisted his sails, engaged him within sight of the shore, and after a very obstinate dispute, in which the captain, lieutenant, and above threescore of the men belonging to the xebeque were killed on the spot, he obliged them to sheer off, and returned to the harbour in triumph. This brave corsair would, no doubt, have signalized himself by many other exploits, had he not, in the sequel, been overtaken in the midst of his career by a dreadful storm, in which the ship foundering, he and all his crew perished.

GENERAL BLAKENEY CREATED A BARON.

Sir Edward Hawke, having scoured the Mediterranean, and insulted the enemy's ports, returned with the homeward-bound trade to Gibraltar; from whence, about the latter end of the year, he set sail for England with part of his squadron, leaving the rest in that bay for the protection of our commerce, which, in those parts, soon began to suffer extremely from French privateers that now swarmed in the Mediterranean. General Blakeney had arrived with the garrison of Minorca, at Portsmouth, in the month of November, and been received with expressions of tumultuous joy: every place through which he passed celebrated his return with bonfires, illuminations, bell-ringing, and acclamations: every mouth was opened in his praise, extolling him for the gallant defence he had made in the castle of St. Philip. In a word, the people's veneration for Blakeney increased in proportion to their abhorrence of Byng: the first was lifted into an idol of admiration, while the other sunk into an object of reproach; and they were viewed at different ends of a false perspective, through the medium of prejudice and passion; of a perspective

artfully contrived, and applied by certain ministers for the purposes of self-interest and deceit. The sovereign is said to have been influenced by the prepossession of the s——t. Mr. Blakeney met with a gracious reception from his majesty, who raised him to the rank of an Irish baron, in consideration of his faithful services; while some malcontents murmured at this mark of favour, as an unreasonable sacrifice to popular misapprehension.

MEASURES TAKEN FOR THE DEFENCE OF GREAT BRITAIN.

In the beginning of the year, the measures taken by the government in England seem to have been chiefly dictated by the dread of an invasion, from which the ministers did not think themselves secured by the guardships and cruisers on different parts of the coast, or the standing army of the kingdom, though reinforced by the two bodies of German auxiliaries. A considerable number of new troops was levied; the success in recruiting was not only promoted by the landholders throughout the kingdom, who thought their estates were at stake, and for that reason encouraged their dependents to engage in the service; but also in a great measure owing to a dearth of corn, which reduced the lower class of labourers to such distress, that some insurrections were raised, and many inlisted with a view to obtain a livelihood, which otherwise they could not earn. New ships of war were built, and daily put in commission; but it was found impracticable to man them without having recourse to the odious and illegal practice of impressing sailors, which must always be a reproach to every free people. Notwithstanding large bounties granted by the government to volunteers, it was found necessary to lay an embargo upon all shipping, and impress all the seamen that could be found,

without any regard to former protections: so that all the merchant ships were stripped of their hands, and foreign commerce for some time wholly suspended. Nay, the expedient of compelling men into the service was carried to an unusual degree of oppression; for rewards were publicly offered to those who should discover where any seamen lay concealed: so that those unhappy people were in some respects treated like felons, dragged from their families and connexions to confinement, mutilation, and death, and totally cut off from the enjoyment of that liberty which, perhaps, at the expense of their lives, their own arms had helped to preserve, in favour of their ungrateful country[x].

About eighty ships of the line and threescore frigates were already equipped, and considerable bodies of land forces assembled, when, on the third day of February, a proclamation was issued, requiring all officers, civil and military, upon the first appearance of any hostile attempt to land upon the coasts of the kingdom, immediately to cause all horses, oxen, or cattle, which might be fit for draught or burden, and not actually employed in the king's service, or in the defence of the country, and also (so far as might be practicable) all other cattle and provisions, to be driven and removed twenty miles at least from the place where such hostile attempt should be made, and to secure the same, so as that they might not fall into the hands or power of those who should make such attempt; regard being had, however, that the respective owners should suffer as little damage as might be consistent with the public safety.

[x] At this juncture, a number of public-spirited merchants of the city of London, and others, formed themselves into a very laudable association, under the name of the Marine Society, and contributed considerable sums of money for equipping such orphans, friendless, and forlorn boys, as were willing to engage in the service of the navy. In consequence of this excellent plan, which was executed with equal zeal and discretion, many thousands were rescued from misery, and rendered useful members of that society, of which they must have been the bane and reproach, without this humane interposition.

EARL OF LOUDOUN APPOINTED COMMANDER IN CHIEF IN AMERICA.

As the ministry were determined to make their chief efforts against the enemy in North America, where the first hostilities had been committed, and where the strongest impression could be made, a detachment of two regiments was sent thither, under the conduct of General Abercrombie, appointed as successor to General Shirley, whom they recalled, as a person nowise qualified to conduct military operations; nor, indeed, could any success in war be expected from a man who had not been trained to arms, nor ever acted but in a civil capacity. But the command in chief of all the forces in America was conferred upon the Earl of Loudoun, a nobleman of an amiable character, who had already distinguished himself in the service of his country. Over and above this command, he was now appointed governor of Virginia, and colonel of a royal American regiment, consisting of four battalions, to be raised in that country, and disciplined by officers of experience, invited from foreign service. Mr. Abercrombie set sail for America in March; but the Earl of Loudoun, who directed in chief the plan of operations, and was vested with power and authority little inferior to those of a viceroy, did not embark till the latter end of May.

HIS BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S DECLARATION OF WAR.

All these previous measures being taken, his majesty, in the course of the same month, thought proper to publish a declaration of war[y] against the French king, importing, that, since the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle,

[y] See note [I], vol. vi.

the usurpations and encroachments made upon the British territories in America had been notorious: that his Britannic majesty had, in divers serious representations to the court of Versailles, complained of these repeated acts of violence, and demanded satisfaction; but notwithstanding the repeated assurances given by the French king, that every thing should be settled agreeably to the treaties subsisting between the two crowns, and particularly that the evacuation of the four neutral islands in the West Indies should be effected, the execution of these assurances, and of the treaties on which they were founded, had been evaded under the most frivolous pretences: that the unjustifiable practices of the French governors, and officers acting under their authority, were still continued, until they broke out in open acts of hostility in the year one thousand seven hundred and fifty-four; when, in time of profound peace, without any declaration of war, without any previous notice given, or application made, a body of French troops, commanded by an officer bearing the French king's commission, attacked in a hostile manner, and took possession of an English fort on the river Ohio, in North America: that great naval armaments were prepared in the ports of France, and a considerable body of French troops embarked for that country: that although the French ambassador was sent back to England with specious professions of a desire to accommodate those differences, it appeared their real design was only to amuse and gain time for the passage of these supplies and reinforcements, which they hoped would secure the superiority of the French forces in America, and enable them to carry their ambitious and oppressive projects into execution: that in consequence of the just and necessary measures taken by the King of Great Britain for preventing the success of such a dangerous design, the French ambassador was immediately recalled from England, the fortifications of Dunkirk were enlarged,

great bodies of troops marched down to the sea-coasts of France, and the British dominions threatened with an invasion: that though the King of England, in order to frustrate such intentions, had given orders for seizing at sea the ships of the French king and his subjects, yet he had hitherto contented himself with detaining those ships which had been taken, and preserving their cargoes entire, without proceeding to confiscation; but it being at last evident, from the hostile invasion of Minorca, that the court of Versailles was determined to reject all proposals of accommodation, and carry on the war with the utmost violence, his Britannic majesty could no longer, consistently with the honour of his crown, and the welfare of his subjects, remain within those bounds which from a desire of peace he had hitherto observed. A denunciation of war followed in the usual form, and was concluded with an assurance, that all the French subjects residing in Great Britain and Ireland, who should demean themselves dutifully to the government, might depend upon its protection, and be safe in their persons and effects.

SUBSTANCE OF THE FRENCH KING'S DECLARATION.

In the beginning of June the French king declared war in his turn against his Britannic majesty, and his declaration was couched in terms of uncommon asperity. He artfully threw a shade over the beginning of hostilities in North America, referring to a memorial which had been delivered to the several courts of Europe, containing a summary of those facts which related to the present war, and the negotiations by which it had been preceded. He insisted on the attack made by the King of England, in the year one thousand seven hundred and fifty-four, on the French possessions in North America; and afterwards by the English navy

on the navigation and commerce of the French subjects, in contempt of the law of nations, and direct violation of treaties. He complained, that the French soldiers and sailors underwent the harshest treatment in the British isles, exceeding those bounds which are prescribed to the most rigorous rights of war, by the law of nature, and common humanity. He affirmed, that while the English ministry, under the appearance of sincerity, imposed upon the French ambassador with false protestations, others diametrically opposite to these deceitful assurances of a speedy accommodation were actually carrying into execution in North America: that while the court of London employed every cabalting art, and squandered away the subsidies of England, to instigate other powers against France, his most christian majesty did not even ask of these powers the succours which guarantees and defensive treaties authorized him to demand; but recommended to them such measures only as tended to their own peace and security: that while the English navy, by the most odious violences, and sometimes by the vilest artifices, made captures of French vessels, navigating in full security under the safeguard of public faith, his most christian majesty released an English frigate taken by a French squadron; and British vessels traded to the ports of France without molestation: that the striking contrast formed by these different methods of proceeding would convince all Europe, that one court was guided by motives of jealousy, ambition, and avarice, and that the conduct of the other was founded on principles of honour, justice, and moderation: that the vague imputations contained in the King of England's declaration had in reality no foundation; and the very manner in which they were set forth would prove their futility and falsehood: that the mention made of the works at Dunkirk, and the troops assembled on the coasts of the ocean, implied the most gross attempts to deceive man-

kind into a belief that these were the points which determined the King of England to issue orders for seizing the French vessels; whereas the works at Dunkirk were not begun till after two French ships of war had been taken by an English squadron; and depredations had been committed six months upon the subjects of France before the first battalions began their march for the sea-side. In a word, the most christian king, laying aside that politeness and decorum on which his people value themselves above all the nations upon the face of the earth, very roundly taxes his brother monarch's administration with piracy, perfidy, inhumanity, and deceit. A charge conveyed in such reproachful terms, against one of the most respectable crowned heads in Europe, will appear the more extraordinary and injurious, if we consider that the accusers were well acquainted with the falsity of their own imputations, and, at the same time, conscious of having practised those very arts which they affected so much to decry. For, after all, it must be allowed, that nothing could be justly urged against the English government, with respect to France, except the omission of a mere form, which other nations might interpret into an irregularity, but could not construe into perfidious dealing, as the French had previously violated the peace by their insolence and encroachments.

ADDRESS OF THE CITY OF LONDON.

Whatever might have been the opinion of other nations, certain it is, the subjects of Great Britain heartily approved of the hostilities committed and intended against a people whom they have always considered as their natural enemies, and the incendiaries of Europe. They cheerfully contributed to the

expense of armaments[z], and seemed to approve of their destination, in hopes of being able to wipe off the disgraces they had sustained in the defeat of Braddock, and the loss of Minorca. The last event made a deep impression upon the minds of the community. An address was presented to the king by the lord mayor, aldermen, and common council of London, containing strong hints to the disadvantage of the ministry. They expressed their apprehension that the loss of the important fortress of St. Philip and island of Minorca, possessions of the utmost consequence to the commerce and naval strength of Great Britain, without any attempt by timely and effectual succours to prevent or defeat an attack, after such early notice of the enemy's intentions, and when his majesty's navy was so evidently superior to theirs, would be an indelible reproach on the honour of the British nation. They expatiated upon the imminent danger to which the British possessions in America were exposed, by the mismanagement and delays which had attended the defence of those invaluable colonies, the object of the present war, the principal source of the wealth and strength of these kingdoms. They lamented the want of a constitutional well-regulated militia, the most natural and certain defence against all invaders whatsoever. They signified their hope, that the authors of the late losses and disappointments would be detected, and brought to condign punishment: that his majesty's known intentions of protecting and defending his subjects in their rights and possessions might be faithfully and vigorously carried into execution; and the large supplies so necessarily demanded, and so cheerfully granted, might be

[z] Immediately after the declaration of war, the French ships and cargoes which had been taken were tried, and condemned as legal prizes, exposed to public sale, and their produce lodged in the bank; but in what manner this money, amounting to a large sum, was distributed or employed, we have not been able to discover.

religiously applied to the defence of these kingdoms, their colonies, and their commerce, as well as to the annoyance of their inveterate and perfidious enemies, the only sure means of obtaining a lasting and honourable peace. In answer to this address, the king assured them that he would not fail to do justice upon any persons who should have been wanting in their duty to him and their country; to enforce obedience and discipline in his fleets and armies; and to support the authority and respect due to his government. Remonstrances of the same kind were presented by different counties and corporations; and the populace clamoured aloud for inquiry and justice.

TRIAL OF GENERAL FOWKE.

The first victim offered to the enraged multitude was the unfortunate General Fowke, who had been deputy-governor of Gibraltar, and behaved with remarkable conduct and integrity in the exercise of that important office till that period, when he fell under the displeasure of the government. He was now brought to trial before a board of general officers, and accused of having disobeyed the orders he had received from the secretary at war, in three successive letters[a], touching the relief of Minorca. Mr. Fowke alleged in his own defence, that the orders were confused and contradictory, and implied a discretionary power: that the whole number of his garrison did not exceed two thousand six hundred men, after he had spared two hundred and seventy-five to the ships commanded by Mr. Edgecumbe: that the ordinary duty of the garrison requiring eight hundred men, the whole number was not sufficient for three reliefs: that, if he had detached a battalion on board the fleet, he should not have had above two reliefs, at a time when he believed the place was in

[a] See note [K], vol. vi.

danger of being attacked, for good reasons, which he did not think himself at liberty to mention; that his orders being doubtful, he held a council of war, which was of opinion, that as undoubted intelligence was received of the French army's being landed at Minorca, to the number of between thirteen and sixteen thousand men, and that a French squadron of sixteen ships was stationed off the harbour, the sending a detachment equal to a battalion from Gibraltar would be an ineffectual supply for the relief of the place, and a weakening of the garrison from which they must be sent. He observed, that supposing the orders to have been positive, and seven hundred men detached to Minorca, the number remaining at Gibraltar would not have exceeded one thousand five hundred and fifty-six: a deduction of seven hundred more, according to the order of May the twelfth, would have left a remainder of eight hundred and fifty-six: that the men daily on duty in the garrison, including artificers and labourers in the king's works, amounted to eight hundred and thirty-nine; so that if he had complied with the orders as they arrived, he would not have had more than seventeen men over and above the number necessary for the daily work of the garrison: thus the important fortress of Gibraltar must, at this critical conjuncture, have been left almost naked and defenceless to the attempts of the enemy; and had those detachments been actually sent abroad, it afterwards appeared that they could not have been landed on the island of Minorca. The order transmitted to General Fowke to detain all empty vessels, for a further transportation of troops, seems to have been superfluous; for it can hardly be supposed he could have occasion for them, unless to embark the whole garrison and abandon the place. It seems likewise to have been unnecessary to exhort the general to keep his garrison as alert as possible, during that critical time; inasmuch as it would have been impossible for

the men to have enjoyed the least repose or intermission of duty, had the orders been punctually and literally obeyed. What other assistance it might have been in the governor's power to give for the relief of Minorca, or in what manner he could avoid fatiguing his garrison, while there was an impossibility of relieving the guards, it is not easy to comprehend. Be that as it may, when the trial was finished, and the question put to acquit or suspend for one year, the court was equally divided; and in such cases the casting vote being vested in the president, he threw it into the scale against the prisoner, whom his majesty thought fit to dismiss from his service.

AFFAIRS OF AMERICA.

The expectation of the public was now eagerly turned towards America, the chief, if not the sole scene of our military operations. On the twenty-fifth day of June, Mr. Abercrombie arrived at Albany, the frontier of New York, and assumed the command of the forces there assembled, consisting of two regiments which had served under Braddock, two battalions raised in America, two regiments now transported from England, four independent companies which had been many years maintained in New York, the New Jersey regiment, four companies levied in North Carolina, and a body of provincial forces raised by the government of New England. Those to the southward, including Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia, had not yet determined on any regular plan of operation, and were moreover hard pressed in defending their western frontiers from the French and Indians, who, in skulking parties, made sudden irruptions upon their unguarded settlements, burning, plundering, and massacring with the most savage inhumanity. As for South Carolina,

the proportion of negro-slaves to the number of white inhabitants was so great in that colony, that the government could not, with any regard to the safety of the province, spare any reinforcement for the general enterprise. The plan of this undertaking had been settled in the preceding year in a council of war, held at New York. There it was resolved to attack the fort of Niagara, situated between the lakes Ontario and Erie, in order to cut off the communication between Canada and Louisiana, and prevent the French from supporting their new fortresses on the Ohio: to reduce Ticonderago and Crown Point, so that the frontier of New York might be delivered from the danger of an invasion, and Great Britain become master of the lake Champlain, over which the forces might be transported in any future attempt: to besiege fort Du Quesne, upon the Ohio; and to detach a body of troops by the river Kennebec, to alarm the capital of Canada. This plan was too extensive for the number of troops which had been prepared: the season was too far advanced before the regiments arrived from England, the different colonies were divided in their opinions, and Mr. Abercrombie postponed the execution of any important scheme till the arrival of Lord Loudoun, who was daily expected. The reasons that delayed the reinforcement, and detained his lordship so long, we do not pretend to explain; though we may be allowed to observe, that many fair opportunities have been lost by the neglect and procrastination of an English ministry. Certain it is, the unaccountable delay of this armament rendered it useless for a whole year, afforded time and leisure to the enemy to take their precautions against any subsequent attack, and, in the mean time, to proceed unmolested in distressing the British settlements. Even before this period, they had attacked and reduced a small post in the country of the Five Nations, occupied

by twenty-five Englishmen, who were cruelly butchered to a man, in the midst of those Indians whom Great Britain had long numbered among her allies.

Soon after this expedition, having received intelligence that a considerable convoy of provisions and stores for the garrison of Oswego would in a little time set out from Schenectady, and be conveyed in batteaux up the river Onondaga, they formed an ambuscade among the woods and thickets on the north side of that river; but understanding the convoy had passed before they reached the place, they resolved to wait the return of the detachment. Their design, however, was frustrated by the vigilance and valour of Colonel Bradstreet, who expected such an attempt, and had taken his measures accordingly. On the third day of July, while he stemmed the stream of the river, with his batteaux formed into three divisions, they were saluted with the Indian war-whoop, and a general discharge of musketry from the north shore. Bradstreet immediately ordered his men to land on the opposite bank, and with a few of the foremost took possession of a small island, where he was forthwith attacked by a party of the enemy, who had forded the river for that purpose; but these were soon repulsed. Another body having passed a mile higher, he advanced to them at the head of two hundred men, and fell upon them, sword in hand, with such vigour, that many were killed on the spot, and the rest driven into the river with such precipitation, that a considerable number of them were drowned. Having received information that a third body of them had passed at a ford still higher, he marched thither without hesitation, and pursued them to the other side, where they were entirely routed and dispersed. In this action, which lasted near three hours, about seventy of the batteau-men were killed or wounded; but the enemy lost double the number killed, and above seventy taken prisoners. In all probability

the whole detachment of the French, amounting to seven hundred men, would have been cut off, had not a heavy rain interposed, and disabled Colonel Bradstreet from following his blow; for that same night he was joined by Captain Patten with his grenadiers, in his march from Oneida to Oswego, and next morning reinforced with two hundred men, detached to his assistance from the garrison of Oswego; but by this time the rivulets were so swelled by the rain, that it was found impracticable to pursue the enemy through the woods and thickets. Patten and his grenadiers accompanied the detachment to Oswego, while Bradstreet pursued his voyage to Schenectady, from whence he repaired to Albany, and communicated to General Abercrombie the intelligence he had received from the prisoners, that a large body of the enemy were encamped on the eastern side of the lake Ontario, provided with artillery, and all other implements to besiege the fort of Oswego.

EARL OF LOUDOUN ARRIVES AT NEW YORK.

In consequence of this information, Major-General Webb was ordered to hold himself in readiness to march with one regiment to the relief of that garrison: but, before they could be provided with necessaries, the Earl of Loudoun arrived at the head-quarters at Albany, on the twenty-ninth day of July. The army at this time is said to have consisted of regular troops to the number of two thousand six hundred, about seven thousand provincials, supposed to be in readiness to march from fort William Henry, under the command of General Winslow, over and above a considerable number of batteau-men at Albany and Schenectady. The garrison at Oswego amounted to fourteen hundred soldiers, besides three hundred workmen and sailors, either in the fort, or posted in small parties between

the fort and place called Burnet's Field, to secure a safe passage through the country of the Six Nations, upon whose friendship there was no longer any reliance. By the best accounts received of the enemy's force, they had about three thousand men at Crown Point and Ticonderoga, upon the lake Champlain: but their chief strength was collected upon the banks of the lake Ontario, where their purpose undoubtedly was to reduce the English fort at Oswego. The immediate object, therefore, of Lord Loudoun's attention was the relief of this place; but his design was strenuously opposed by the province of New York, and other northern governments, who were much more intent upon the reduction of Crown Point, and the security of their own frontiers, which they apprehended was connected with this conquest. They insisted upon Winslow's being joined by some regiments of regular troops before he should march against this fortress; and stipulated that a body of reserve should be detained at Albany, for the defence of that frontier, in case Winslow should fail in his enterprise, and be defeated. At length they agreed, that the regiment which Mr. Abercrombie had destined for that purpose should be detached for the relief of Oswego; and on the twelfth day of August, Major-General Webb began his march with it from Albany; but on his arrival at the Carrying-place, between the Mohock's river and Wood's creek, he received the disagreeable news that Oswego was taken, and the garrison made prisoners of war. Mr. Webb, apprehending himself in danger of being attacked by the besieging army, began immediately to render the creek impassable, even to canoes, by felling trees, and throwing them into the stream; while the enemy, ignorant of his numbers, and apprehensive of a like visitation from him, took the very same method of preventing his approach: in consequence of this apprehension, he was permitted to retire unmolested.

OSWEGO REDUCED BY THE ENEMY.

The loss of the two small forts, called Ontario and Oswego, was a considerable national misfortune. They were erected on the south side of the great lake Ontario, standing on the opposite sides, at the mouth of the Onondago river, that discharges itself into the lake, and constituted a post of great importance, where vessels had been built, to cruise upon the lake, which is a kind of inland sea, and interrupt the commerce as well as the motions and designs of the enemy. The garrison, as we have already observed, consisted of fourteen hundred men, chiefly militia and new-raised recruits, under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Mercer, an officer of courage and experience; but the situation of the forts was very ill chosen; the materials mostly timber or logs of wood; the defences wretchedly contrived and unfinished; and, in a word, the place altogether untenable against any regular approach. Such were the forts which the enemy wisely resolved to reduce. Being under no apprehension for Crown Point, they assembled a body of troops, consisting of thirteen hundred regulars, seventeen hundred Canadians, and a considerable number of Indian auxiliaries, under the command of the Marquis de Montcalm, a vigilant and enterprising officer, to whom the conduct of the siege was intrusted by the Marquis de Vaudreuil, governor and lieutenant-general of New France. The first step taken by Montcalm was to block up Oswego by water, with two large armed vessels, and post a strong body of Canadians on the road between Albany and the forts, to cut off all communication of succour and intelligence. In the mean time, he embarked his artillery and stores upon the lake, and landed them in the bay of Nixouri, the place of general rendezvous. At another creek, within half a league of Oswego, he erected a battery for

the protection of his vessels; and on the twelfth day of August, at midnight, after his dispositions had been made, he opened the trenches before fort Ontario. The garrison, having fired away all their shells and ammunition, spiked up the cannon, and, deserting the fort, retired next day across the river into Oswego, which was even more exposed than the other, especially when the enemy had taken possession of Ontario, from whence they immediately began to fire without intermission. Colonel Mercer being, on the thirteenth, killed by a cannon ball, the fort destitute of all cover, the officers divided in opinion, and the garrison in confusion, they next day demanded a capitulation, and surrendered prisoners of war, on condition that they should be exempted from plunder, conducted to Montreal, and treated with humanity. These conditions, however, the marquis did not punctually observe. The British officers and soldiers were insulted by the savage Indians, who robbed them of their clothes and baggage, massacred several men as they stood defenceless on the parade, assassinated Lieutenant De la Court, as he lay wounded in his tent, under the protection of a French officer, and barbarously scalped all the sick people in the hospital: finally, Montcalm, in direct violation of the articles, as well as in contempt of common humanity, delivered up above twenty men of the garrison to the Indians, in lieu of the same number they had lost during the siege; and, in all probability, these miserable captives were put to death by those barbarians with the most excruciating tortures, according to the execrable custom of the country. Those who countenance the perpetration of cruelties at which human nature shudders with horror ought to be branded as infamous to all posterity. Such, however, were the trophies that, in the course of the American war, distinguished the operations of a people who pique themselves upon politeness and the virtues of humanity.

The prisoners taken at Oswego, after having been thus barbarously treated, were conveyed in batteaux to Montreal, where they had no reason to complain of their reception; and before the end of the year they were exchanged. The victors immediately demolished the two forts (if they deserved that denomination), in which they found one hundred and twenty-one pieces of artillery, fourteen mortars, with a great quantity of ammunition, warlike stores, and provisions, besides two sloops, and two hundred batteaux, which likewise fell into their hands. Such an important magazine, deposited in a place altogether indefensible, and without the reach of immediate succour, was a flagrant proof of egregious folly, temerity, and misconduct.

FURTHER PROCEEDINGS IN AMERICA.

The Earl of Loudoun, finding the season too far advanced to admit of any enterprise against the enemy, exerted all his endeavours in making preparations for an early campaign in the spring, securing the frontiers of the English colonies, in forming an uniform plan of action, and promoting a spirit of harmony among the different governments, which had been long divided by jarring interests, and other sources of dissension. Meanwhile, the forts Edward and William Henry were put in a proper posture of defence, and secured with numerous garrisons; and the forces put into winter-quarters at Albany, where comfortable barracks were built for that purpose. Fort Granvilla, on the confines of Pennsylvania, an inconsiderable block-house, was surprised by a party of French and Indians, who made the garrison prisoners, consisting of two-and-twenty soldiers, with a few women and children. These they loaded with flour and provisions, and drove them into captivity; but the fort they reduced to ashes. Many shocking murders were perpetrated upon defenceless

people, without distinction of age or sex, in different parts of the frontiers; but these outrages were, in some measure, balanced by the advantages resulting from a treaty of peace, which the governor of Pennsylvania concluded with the Delaware Indians, a powerful tribe that dwell upon the river Sasquehanna, forming, as it were, a line along the southern skirts of the province. At the same time the governor of Virginia secured the friendship and alliance of the Cherokees and Catawbas, two powerful nations adjoining to that colony, who were able to bring three thousand fighting men into the field. All these circumstances considered, Great Britain had reason to expect that the ensuing campaign would be vigorously prosecuted in America, especially as a fresh reinforcement of troops, with a great supply of warlike stores, were sent to that country in fourteen transports, under convoy of two ships of war, which sailed from Cork, in Ireland, about the beginning of November.

NAVAL OPERATIONS IN AMERICA.

No action of great importance distinguished the naval transactions of this year on the side of America. In the beginning of June, Captain Spry, who commanded a small squadron, cruising off Louisbourg, in the island of Cape Breton, took the Arc-en-Ciel, a French ship of fifty guns, having on board near six hundred men, with a large quantity of stores and provisions for the garrison. He likewise made prize of another French ship, with seventy soldiers, two hundred barrels of powder, two large brass mortars, and other stores of the like destination. On the twenty-seventh day of July, Commodore Holmes, being in the same latitude, with two large ships and a couple of sloops, engaged two French ships of the line and four frigates, and obliged them to sheer off, after an obstinate dispute. A great number of privateers were equipped in this

country, as well as in the West India islands belonging to the crown of Great Britain; and as those seas swarmed with French vessels, their cruises proved very advantageous to the adventurers.

TRANSACTIONS IN THE EAST INDIES.

Scenes of higher import were this year acted by the British arms in the East Indies. The cessation of hostilities between the English and French companies on the peninsula of Indus, though it encouraged Mr. Clive to visit his native country, was not of long duration; for in a few months both sides recommenced their operations, no longer as auxiliaries to the princes of the country, but as principals and rivals, both in arms and commerce. Major Lawrence, who now enjoyed the chief command of the English force, obtained divers advantages over the enemy; and prosecuted his success with such vigour as, in all probability, would, in a little time, have terminated the war according to his own wish, when the progress of his arms was interrupted and suspended by an unfortunate event at Calcutta, the cause of which is not easily explained; for extraordinary pains have been taken to throw a veil over some transactions, from whence this calamity was immediately or remotely derived.

CALCUTTA BESIEGED BY THE VICEROY OF BENGAL.

The old Suba or Viceroy of Bengal, Bahar, and Orixa, dying in the month of April, in the year one thousand seven hundred and fifty-six, was succeeded by his adopted son, Sur Raja al Dowlat, a young man of violent passions, without principle, fortitude, or good faith, who began his administration with acts of perfidy and violence. In all probability, his design against the

English settlements was suggested by his rapacious disposition, on a belief that they abounded with treasure; as the pretences which he used for commencing hostilities were altogether inconsistent, false, and frivolous. In the month of May, he caused the English factory at Cassimbuzzar to be invested, and inviting Mr. Watts, the chief of the factory, to a conference, under the sanction of a safe conduct, detained him as prisoner; then, by means of fraud and force intermingled, made himself master of the factory. This exploit being achieved, he made no secret of his design to deprive the English of all their settlements. With this view he marched to Calcutta, at the head of a numerous army, and invested the place, which was then in no posture of defence.

FATE OF THOSE WHO PERISHED IN THE DUNGEON AT CALCUTTA.

The governor, intimidated by the number and power of the enemy, abandoned the fort, and, with some principal persons residing in the settlement, took refuge on board a ship in the river, carrying along with them their most valuable effects, and the books of the company. Thus the defence of the place devolved to Mr. Holwell, the second in command, who, with the assistance of a few gallant officers, and a very feeble garrison, maintained it with uncommon courage and resolution against several attacks, until he was overpowered by numbers, and the enemy had forced their way into the castle. Then he was obliged to submit; and the suba, or viceroy, promised, on the word of a soldier, that no injury should be done to him or his garrison. Nevertheless, they were all driven, to the number of one hundred and forty-six persons of both sexes, into a place called the Black Hole prison, a cube of about eighteen feet, walled up to the eastward and southward, the only quarters from which they could expect the least re-

freshing air, and open to the westward by two windows strongly barred with iron, through which there was no perceptible circulation. The humane reader will conceive with horror the miserable situation to which they must have been reduced, when thus stewed up in a close sultry night under such a climate as that of Bengal, especially when he reflects that many of them were wounded, and all of them fatigued with hard duty. Transported with rage to find themselves thus barbarously cooped up in a place where they must be exposed to suffocation, those hapless victims endeavoured to force open the door, that they might rush upon the swords of the barbarians by whom they were surrounded; but all their efforts were ineffectual: the door was made to open inwards, and being once shut upon them, the crowd pressed upon it so strongly as to render all their endeavours abortive: then they were overwhelmed with distraction and despair. Mr. Holwell, who had placed himself at one of the windows, accosted a Jemmautdaar, or serjeant of the Indian guard, and having endeavoured to excite his compassion, by drawing a pathetic picture of their sufferings, promised to gratify him with a thousand rupees in the morning, if he could find means to remove one half of them into a separate apartment. The soldier, allured by the promise of such a reward, assured him he would do his endeavour for their relief, and retired for that purpose; but in a few minutes returned, and told him that the suba, by whose order alone such a step could be taken, was asleep, and no person durst disturb his repose. By this time a profuse sweat had broke out on every individual, and this was attended with an insatiable thirst, which became the more intolerable as the body was drained of its moisture. In vain those miserable objects stripped themselves of their clothes, squatted down on their hams, and fanned the air with their hats, to produce a refreshing undulation. Many were unable to rise again

from this posture, but falling down were trod to death, or suffocated. The dreadful symptom of thirst was now accompanied with a difficulty of respiration, and every individual gasped for breath. Their despair became outrageous: again they attempted to force the door, and provoke the guard to fire upon them by execration and abuse. The cry of "Water! water!" issued from every mouth. Even the Jemmautdaar was moved to compassion at their distress. He ordered his soldiers to bring some skins of water, which served only to enrage the appetite, and increase the general agitation. There was no other way of conveying it through the windows but by hats, and this was rendered ineffectual by the eagerness and transports of the wretched prisoners, who, at sight of it, struggled and raved even into fits of delirium. In consequence of these contests, very little reached those who stood nearest the windows, while the rest, at the farther end of the prison, were totally excluded from all relief, and continued calling upon their friends for assistance, and conjuring them by all the tender ties of pity and affection. To those who were indulged, it proved pernicious; for, instead of allaying their thirst, it enraged their impatience for more. The confusion became general and horrid; all was clamour and contest: those who were at a distance endeavoured to force their passage to the window, and the weak were pressed down to the ground, never to rise again. The inhuman ruffians without derived entertainment from their misery: they supplied the prisoners with more water, and held up lights close to the bars, that they might enjoy the inhuman pleasure of seeing them fight for the baneful indulgence. Mr. Holwell seeing all his particular friends lying dead around him, and trampled upon by the living, finding himself wedged up so close as to be deprived of all motion, begged, as the last instance of their regard, that they would remove the pressure, and allow him to re-

tire from the window, that he might die in quiet. Even in those dreadful circumstances, which might be supposed to have levelled all distinction, the poor delirious wretches manifested a respect for his rank and character: they forthwith gave way, and he forced his passage into the centre of the place, which was not crowded so much, because, by this time, about one-third of the number had perished, and lay in little compass on the floor, while the rest still crowded to both windows. He retired to a platform at the farther end of the room, and laying down upon some of his dead friends, recommended his soul to heaven. Here his thirst grew insupportable; his difficulty in breathing increased, and he was seized with a strong palpitation. These violent symptoms, which he could not bear, urged him to make another effort: he forced his way back to the window, and cried aloud, "Water! for God's sake!" He had been supposed already dead by his wretched companions, but finding him still alive, they exhibited another extraordinary proof of tenderness and regard to his person: "Give him water," they cried; nor would any of them attempt to touch it until he had drank. He now breathed more freely, and the palpitation ceased; but finding himself still more thirsty after drinking, he abstained from water, and moistened his mouth from time to time, by sucking the perspiration from his shirt sleeves[b]. The miserable prisoners, perceiving that water rather aggravated than relieved their distress, grew clamorous for air, and repeated their insults to the guard, loading the suba and his governor with the most virulent reproach. From railing they had recourse to prayer, beseeching Heaven to put an end to their misery. They now began to drop on all hands; but then a steam arose from the living and the dead, as pungent

[b] In his despair of obtaining water, this unhappy gentleman had attempted to drink his own urine, but found it intolerably bitter; whereas the moisture that flowed from the pores of his body was soft, pleasant, and refreshing.

and volatile as spirit of hartshorn; so that all who could not approach the windows were suffocated. Mr. Holwell, being weary of life, retired once more to the platform, and stretched himself by the Rev. Mr. Jervis Bellamy, who, together with his son, a lieutenant, lay dead in each other's embrace. In this situation he was soon deprived of sense, and lay to all appearance dead till day broke, when his body was discovered, and removed by his surviving friends to one of the windows, where the fresh air revived him, and he was restored to his sight and senses. The suba, at last, being informed that the greater part of the prisoners were suffocated, inquired if the chief was alive; and being answered in the affirmative, sent an order for their immediate release, when no more than twenty-three survived of a hundred and forty-six who had entered alive.

ADDITIONAL CRUELTIES EXERCISED ON MR. HOLWELL.

Nor was the late deliverance, even of these few, owing to any sentiment of compassion in the viceroy. He had received intimation that there was a considerable treasure secreted in the fort, and that Mr. Holwell knew the place where it was deposited. That gentleman, who, with his surviving companions, had been seized with a putrid fever, immediately upon their release, was dragged in that condition before the inhuman suba, who questioned him about the treasure, which existed nowhere but in his own imagination; and would give no credit to his protestations, when he solemnly declared he knew of no such deposit. Mr. Holwell and three of his friends were loaded with fetters, and conveyed three miles to the Indian camp, where they lay all night exposed to a severe rain: next morning they were brought back to town, still manacled, under the scorching beams of a sun intensely hot; and

must infallibly have expired, had not nature expelled the fever in large painful boils, that covered almost the whole body. In this piteous condition they were embarked in an open boat for Muxadavad, the capital of Bengal, and underwent such cruel treatment and misery in their passage, as would shock the humane reader, should he peruse the particulars. At Muxadavad they were led through the city in chains, as a spectacle to the inhabitants, lodged in an open stable, and treated for some days as the worst of criminals. At length, the suba's grandmother interposed her mediation in their behalf; and as that prince was by this time convinced that there was no treasure concealed at Calcutta, he ordered them to be set at liberty. When some of his sycophants opposed this indulgence, representing that Mr. Holwell had still enough left to pay a considerable ransom, he replied, with some marks of compunction and generosity, "If he has any thing left, let him keep it; his sufferings have been great: he shall have his liberty." Mr. Holwell and his friends were no sooner unfettered than they took water from the Dutch tanksall or mint, in the neighbourhood of that city, where they were received with great tenderness and humanity. The reader, we hope, will excuse us for having thus particularized a transaction so interesting and extraordinary in all its circumstances. The suba having destroyed Calcutta, and dispersed the inhabitants, extorted large sums from the French and Dutch factories, that he might display a spirit of impartiality against all the Europeans, even in his oppression, and returned to his city of Muxadavad in triumph. By the reduction of Calcutta, the English East India company's affairs were so much embroiled in that part of the world, that perhaps nothing could have retrieved them but the interposition of a national force, and the good fortune of a Clive, whose enterprises were always crowned with success.

As the English East India company had, for a whole century, been at a considerable expense in maintaining a marine force at Bombay, to protect their ships from the piracies of the Angrias, who had rendered themselves independent princes, and fortified Geriah in that neighbourhood; many unsuccessful attempts had been made to destroy their naval power, and reduce the fortress, under which they always took shelter. In the year one thousand seven hundred and fifty-four, the fleet of Tullagee Angria, the reigning prince, attacked three Dutch ships of force, which they either took or destroyed. Elated with this success, he boasted that he should, in a little time, sweep the seas of the Europeans, and began to build some large ships, to reinforce his grabs and gallivats, which were the vessels on which he had formerly depended. Next year his neighbours, the Mahrattas, having signified to the presidency at Bombay that they were disposed to join in the necessary service of humbling this common enemy, so formidable to the whole Malabar coast, Commodore James was detached with some ships of force to attack Angria, in conjunction with those allies. They accordingly joined him with seven grabs and sixty gallivats. They proceeded to the harbour of Severndroog, where Angria's fleet lay at anchor: but they no sooner received intelligence of his approach than they slipped their cables, and stood out to sea. He chased them with all the canvas he could carry; but their vessels being lighter than his, they escaped; and he returned to Severndroog, which is a fortress situated on an island within musket-shot of the main land, strongly but irregularly fortified, and mounted with fifty-four pieces of cannon. There were three other small forts on the Continent, the largest of which was called Goa. On the second day of April, the commodore began to batter and bombard the island, fort, and fort Goa, at the same time. That of Severndroog was set on fire; one of the ma-

gazines blew up; a general conflagration ensued; the garrisons were overwhelmed with fire and confusion; the English seamen landed under cover of the fire from the ships, and took the place by storm with very little loss. The other forts were immediately surrendered, and all of these, by treaty, delivered to the Mahrattas. On the eighth of April, the commodore anchored off Bancote, now called Fort Victoria, one of the most northern parts of Angria's dominion, which surrendered without opposition, and still remains in the hands of the English East India company, by the consent of the Mahrattas. The harbour is good, and here is a great trade for salt and other commodities sent hither from Bombay.

FORT OF GERIAH TAKEN BY ADMIRAL WATSON AND MR. CLIVE.

It was in November following, that the squadron under Admiral Watson arrived at Bombay, where it was resolved to give Angria the finishing stroke, still in conjunction with the Mahrattas. Meanwhile Commodore James was sent to reconnoitre Geriah, the capital of his dominions, and to sound the depth of the harbour; a service which he successfully performed. The admiral being joined by a division of ships, fitted out at the company's expense, having on board a body of troops commanded by Colonel Clive, sailed on the seventh day of February, and found in the neighbourhood of Geriah the Mahratta fleet, consisting of four grabs, and forty smaller vessels, called gallivats, lying to the northward of the place, in a creek called Rajipore; and a land army of horse and foot, amounting to seven or eight thousand men, the whole commanded by Rhamagee Punt, who had already taken one small fort, and was actually treating about the surrender of Geriah. Angria himself had quitted the place, but his

wife and family remained under the protection of his brother-in-law; who, being summoned to surrender by a message from the admiral, replied that he would defend the place to the last extremity. In consequence of this refusal, the whole English fleet, in two divisions, sailed on the twelfth day of February into the harbour, and sustained a warm fire from the enemy's batteries as they passed, as well as from the grabs posted in the harbour for that purpose; this, however, was soon silenced after the ships were brought to their stations, so as to return the salutation. Between the hours of four and five in the afternoon, a shell being thrown into one of Angria's armed vessels set her on fire; and the flames communicating to the rest, they were all destroyed; between six and seven the fort was set on fire by another shell; and soon after the firing ceased on both sides. The admiral, suspecting that the governor of the place would surrender it to the Mahrattas rather than to the English, disembarked all the troops under Mr. Clive, that he might be at hand, in case of emergency, to take possession. In the mean time, the fort was bombarded; the line-of-battle ships were warped near enough to batter in breach; and then the admiral sent an officer, with a flag of truce, to the governor, requiring him to surrender. His proposal being again rejected, the English ships renewed their fire next day with redoubled vigour. About one o'clock the magazine of the fort blew up, and at four the garrison hung out a white flag for capitulation. The parley that ensued proving ineffectual, the engagement began again, and continued till fifteen minutes after five; when the white flag was again displayed, and now the governor submitted to the terms which were imposed. Angria's flag was immediately hauled down; and two English captains, taking possession of the fort with a detachment, forthwith hoisted the British ensign. To these captains, whose names were Buchannan and

Forbes, the Mahrattas offered a bribe of fifty thousand rupees, if they would allow them to pass their guards, that they might take possession of the fort for themselves; but this offer was rejected with disdain, and immediately disclosed to Colonel Clive, who took effectual measures to frustrate their design. In this place, which was reduced with very inconsiderable loss, the conquerors found above two hundred cannon, six brass mortars, a large quantity of ammunition, with money and effects to the value of one hundred and thirty thousand pounds. The fleet which was destroyed consisted of eight grabs, one ship finished, two upon the stocks, and a good number of gallivats. Among the prisoners, the admiral found Angria's wife, children, and mother, towards whom he demeaned himself with great humanity. Three hundred European soldiers, and as many sepoys, were left to guard the fort; and four of the company's armed vessels remained in the harbour for the defence of the place, which was extremely well situated for commerce[c].

The admiral and Mr. Clive sailed back to Madras in triumph, and there another plan was formed for restoring the company's affairs upon the Ganges, recovering Calcutta, and taking vengeance on the cruel Viceroy of Bengal. In October they set sail again for the bottom of the bay; and about the beginning of December arrived at Balasore, in the kingdom of Bengal. Having crossed the Braces, they proceeded up the river Ganges as far as Falta, where they found Governor Drake, and the other persons who had escaped on board of the

[c] When the admiral entered their apartment, the whole family, shedding floods of tears, fell with their faces to the ground; from which being raised, the mother of Angria told him, in a piteous tone, the people had no king, she no son, her daughter no husband, their children no father. The admiral replying, "they must look upon him as their father and their friend;" the youngest boy, about six years of age, seized him by the hand, and sobbing exclaimed, "then you shall be my father." Mr. Watson was so affected with this pathetic address, that the tears trickled down his cheeks, while he assured them they might depend upon his protection and friendship.

ships when Calcutta was invested. Colonel Clive was disembarked with his forces to attack the fort of Busbudgia by land, while the admiral battered it by sea; but the place being ill provided with cannon, did not hold out above an hour after the firing began. This conquest being achieved at a very easy purchase, two of the greatest ships anchored between Tanny Fort and a battery on the other side of the river, which were abandoned before one shot was discharged against either; thus the passage was laid open to Calcutta, the reduction of which we shall record among the transactions of the ensuing year.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Motives of the War in Germany.—Conspiracy in Sweden.—Measures taken by the King of Prussia and Elector of Hanover.—Endeavours of the Court of Vienna to frustrate them.—His Prussian Majesty demands an Explanation from the Empress-Queen.—Her Answer.—The Prussian Army enters Saxony, and publishes a Manifesto.—Prince Ferdinand takes Leipsic.—King of Prussia takes Possession of Dresden, and blocks up the King of Poland at Pirna.—Prussian Army penetrates into Bohemia, and fights the Battle of Lowoschutz.—Saxon Army surrenders.—King of Poland's Memorial to the States-General.—Imperial Decrees published against the King of Prussia.—Declarations of different Powers.—His Prussian Majesty's Answer to the Saxon Memorial.—And Justification of his Conduct.—Remarks on both those Pieces.—Disputes between the Parliament of Paris and the Clergy.—Dearth of Corn in England.—Hanoverian Auxiliaries sent back.—Session opened.—Debates on the Address.—Bill passed for prohibiting the Exportation of Corn.—Message to the House concerning Admiral Byng.—Supplies granted.—Reflections on the continental War.—Messages from the King to the Parliament.—Measures taken to remove the Scarcity of Corn.—Militia Bill.—Petitions for and against it.—Altered by the Lords.—Bill for quartering the foreign Troops, and for regulating the Marines while on Shore.—Bill for the more speedy recruiting the Land Forces and Marines.—Act relating to Pawnbrokers and Gaming-Houses.—Laws relating to the Wages of Weavers, and to the Improvement of the British Fishery.—Act for importing American Iron, Duty free.—Regulations with Respect to the Importation of Silk.—Smugglers encouraged to enter into his Majesty's Service.—Inquiry into the Scarcity of Corn.—Investigation of the Loss of Minorca.—Examination of the American Contract.—Inquiry into the Conduct of Admiral Knowles, as Governor of Jamaica.—Resolutions concerning Milford-Haven.—Session closed.—Trial of Admiral Byng.—Recommended to Mercy.—Message from the King to the Parliament respecting the Sentence.—Bill to release the Members of the Court Martial from their Oath of Secrecy.—Execution of Admiral Byng.—Paper delivered by him to the Marshal of the Admiralty.—Remarks on his Fate.

MOTIVES OF THE WAR IN GERMANY. CONSPIRACY IN SWEDEN.

Having thus, to the best of our power, given a faithful and exact detail of every material event in which Great Britain was concerned, either at home or in her settlements abroad, during the greatest part of the year one thousand seven hundred and fifty-six, we shall now return to Europe, and endeavour to explain the beginning of a bloody war in Germany, which then seemed to have become the chief object of the British councils. On the eve of a rupture between France and England, it was natural for his Britannic majesty to provide for the safety of his electoral dominions, the only quarter by which he was at all accessible to the efforts of the enemy, who he foresaw would not fail to annoy him through that avenue. He, at that time, stood upon indifferent terms with the King of Prussia, who was considered as a partisan and ally of France; and he knew that the House of Austria alone would not be sufficient to support him against two such powerful antagonists. In this emergency, he had recourse to the Empress of Russia, who, in consequence of a large subsidy granted by England, engaged to furnish a strong body of forces for the defence of Hanover. His Prussian majesty, startled at the conditions of this treaty, took an opportunity to declare that he would not suffer foreign forces of any nation to enter the empire, either as principals or auxiliaries; a declaration which probably flowed from a jealousy and aversion he had conceived to the court of Petersburgh, as well as from a resolution he had formed of striking some great stroke in Germany, without any risk of being restricted or controlled. He knew he should give umbrage to the French king, who had already made preparations for penetrating into Westphalia; but he took it for granted he should be able to

exchange his connexions with France for the alliance with Great Britain, which would be much less troublesome, and much more productive of advantage; indeed, such an alliance was the necessary consequence of his declaration. Had his Britannic majesty made a requisition of the Russian auxiliaries, he must have exposed himself to the resentment of a warlike monarch, who hovered on the skirts of his electorate at the head of one hundred and forty thousand men, and could have subdued the whole country in one week; and if he forbore to avail himself of the treaty with the czarina, he did not know how soon the King of Prussia might be reconciled to his most christian majesty's design of invasion. As for the empress-queen, her attention was engrossed by schemes for her interest or preservation; and her hands so full, that she either could not, or would not, fulfil the engagements she had contracted with her former and firmest allies. In these circumstances the King of England sought and obtained the alliance of Prussia, which, to the best of our comprehension, entailed upon Great Britain the enormous burthen of extravagant subsidies, together with the intolerable expense of a continental war, without being productive of one advantage, either positive or negative, to England or Hanover. On the contrary, this connexion threw the empress-queen into the arms of France, whose friendship she bought at the expense of the barrier in the Netherlands, acquired with infinite labour, by the blood and treasure of the maritime powers: it gave birth to a confederacy of despotic princes; sufficient, if their joint force was fully exerted, to overthrow the liberties of all the free states in Europe; and, after all, Hanover has been overrun and subdued by the enemy; and the King of Prussia put to the ban of the empire. All these consequences are, we apprehend, fairly deducible from the resolution which his Prussian majesty took at this juncture, to precipitate a war with the house

of Austria. The apparent motives that prompted him to this measure we shall presently explain. In the mean time, the defensive treaty between the empress-queen and France was no sooner ratified, than the czarina was invited to accede to the alliance, and a private minister sent from Paris to Petersburgh, to negotiate the conditions of this accession, which the Empress of Russia accordingly embraced: a circumstance so agreeable to the court of Versailles, that the Marquis de L'Hopital was immediately appointed ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary to the court of Russia. Applications were likewise made to the courts of Madrid and Turin, soliciting their concurrence; but their catholic and Sardinian majesties wisely resolved to observe a neutrality. At the same time, intrigues were begun by the French emissaries in the senate of Sweden, in order to kindle up a war between that nation and Prussia; and their endeavours succeeded in the sequel, even contrary to the inclination of their sovereign. At present, a plot was discovered for altering the form of government, by increasing the power of the crown; and several persons of rank being convicted upon trial, were beheaded as principals in this conspiracy. Although it did not appear that the king or queen were at all concerned in the scheme, his Swedish majesty thought himself so hardly treated by the diet, that he threatened to resign his royalty, and retire into his own hereditary dominions. This design was extremely disagreeable to the people in general, who espoused his cause in opposition to the diet, by whom they conceived themselves more oppressed than they should have been under an unlimited monarchy.

MEASURES TAKEN BY THE KING OF PRUSSIA AND ELECTOR OF HANOVER.

The King of Prussia, alarmed at these formidable alliances, ordered all his forces to be completed, and held in readiness to march at the first notice; and a report was industriously circulated, that, by a secret article in the late treaty between France and the house of Austria, these two powers had obliged themselves to destroy the protestant religion, and overturn the freedom of the empire, by a forced election of a king of the Romans. The cry of religion was no impolitic measure: but it no longer produced the same effect as in times past. Religion was made a pretence on both sides; for the partisans of the empress-queen insinuated, on all occasions, that the ruin of the catholic faith in Germany was the principal object of the new alliance between the Kings of Great Britain and Prussia. It was in consequence of such suggestions, that his Britannic majesty ordered his electoral minister at the diet to deliver a memorial to all the ministers at Ratisbon, expressing his surprise to find the treaty he had concluded with the King of Prussia industriously represented as a ground of apprehension and umbrage, especially for religion. He observed, that as France had made open dispositions for invading the electorate of Hanover, and disturbing the peace of the empire; that as he had been denied, by the empress-queen, the succours stipulated in treaties of alliance; and as he was refused assistance by certain states of the empire, who even seemed disposed to favour such a diversion; he had, in order to provide for the security of his own dominions, to establish peace and tranquillity in the empire, and maintain its system and privileges, without any prejudice to religion, concluded a defensive treaty with the King of Prussia: that, by this instance of patriotic zeal for the

welfare of Germany, he had done an essential service to the empress-queen, and performed the part which the head of the empire, in dignity and duty, ought to have acted; that time would demonstrate how little it was the interest of the empress-queen to engage in a strict alliance with a foreign power, which, for upwards of two centuries, had ravaged the principal provinces of the empire, maintained repeated wars against the archducal house of Austria, and always endeavoured, as it suited her views, to excite distrust and dissension among the princes and states that compose the Germanic body.

The court of Vienna formed two considerable armies in Bohemia and Moravia; yet pretended that they had nothing in view but self-preservation, and solemnly disclaimed both the secret article, and the design which had been laid to their charge. His most christian majesty declared, by his minister at Berlin, that he had no other intention but to maintain the public tranquillity of Europe; and this being the sole end of all his measures, he beheld, with surprise, the preparations and armaments of certain potentates: that, whatever might be the view with which they were made, he was disposed to make use of the power which God had put into his hands, not only to maintain the public peace of Europe against all who should attempt to disturb it, but also to employ all his forces, agreeably to his engagements, for the assistance of his ally, in case her dominions should be attacked: finally, that he would act in the same manner in behalf of all the other powers with whom he was in alliance. This intimation made very little impression upon the King of Prussia, who had already formed his plan, and was determined to execute his purpose. What his original plan might have been, we shall not pretend to disclose; nor do we believe he imparted it to any confident or ally. It must be confessed, however, that the intrigues of the

court of Vienna furnished him with a specious pretence for drawing the sword, and commencing hostilities. The empress-queen had some reason to be jealous of such a formidable neighbour. She remembered his irruption into Bohemia, in the year one thousand seven hundred and forty-four, at a time when she thought that country, and all her other dominions, secure from his invasion, by the treaty of Breslau, which she had in no particular contravened. She caballed against him in different courts of Europe: she concluded a treaty with the czarina, which, though seemingly defensive, implied an intention of making conquests upon this monarch: she endeavoured to engage the King of Poland, Elector of Saxony, as a contracting power in this confederacy; and, if he had not been afraid of a sudden visit from his neighbour of Prussia, it cannot be supposed but he would have been pleased to contribute to the humiliation of a prince, who had once before, without the least provocation, driven him from his dominions, taken possession of his capital, routed his troops, and obliged him to pay a million of crowns to indemnify him for the expense of this expedition; but he carefully avoided taking such a step as might expose him to another invasion, and even refused to accede to the treaty of Petersburgh, though it was expressly defensive; the *casus fœderis* being his Prussian majesty's attacking either of the contracting parties. It appears, however, that Count de Bruhl, prime minister and favourite of the King of Poland, had, in conjunction with some of the Austrian ministers, carried on certain scandalous intrigues, in order to embroil the King of Prussia with the Empress of Russia, between whom a misunderstanding had long subsisted.

HIS PRUSSIAN MAJESTY DEMANDS AN EXPLANATION FROM THE EMPRESS-QUEEN.

His Prussian majesty, perceiving the military preparations of the court of Vienna, and having obtained intelligence of their secret negotiations with different powers of Europe, ordered M. de Klingraafe, his minister at the imperial court, to demand whether all these preparations for war, on the frontiers of Silesia, were designed against him, and what were the intentions of her imperial majesty? To this demand the empress replied, that in the present juncture she had found it necessary to make armaments, as well for her own defence as for that of her allies; but that they did not tend to the prejudice of any person or state whatever. The king, far from being satisfied with this general answer, sent fresh orders to Klingraafe, to represent that, after the king had dissembled as long as he thought consistent with his safety and honour, the bad designs imputed to the empress would not suffer him longer to disguise his sentiments; that he was acquainted with the offensive projects which the two courts had formed at Petersburgh; that he knew they had engaged to attack him suddenly with an army of two hundred thousand men; a design which would have been executed in the spring of the year, had not the Russian forces wanted recruits, their fleet mariners, and Livonia a sufficient quantity of corn for their support; that he constituted the empress arbiter of peace or war: if she desired the former, he required a clear and formal declaration, or positive assurance, that she had no intention to attack him, either this year or the next; but he should look upon an ambiguous answer as a declaration of war; and he called Heaven to witness, that the empress alone would be guilty of the innocent blood that

should be spilt, and all the dismal consequences that would attend the commission of hostilities.

A declaration of this nature might have provoked a less haughty court than that of Vienna, and, indeed, seems to have been calculated on purpose to exasperate the pride of her imperial majesty, whose answer he soon received to this effect: that his majesty the King of Prussia had already been employed, for some time, in all kinds of the most considerable preparation of war, and the most disquieting with regard to the public tranquillity, when he thought fit to demand explanations of her majesty, touching the military dispositions that were making in her dominions; dispositions on which she had not resolved till after the preparations of his Prussian majesty had been made; that though her majesty might have declined explaining herself on those subjects, which required no explanation, she had been pleased to declare, with her own mouth, to M. de Klingraafe, that the critical state of public affairs rendered the measures she had taken absolutely necessary for her own safety, and that of her allies; but that, in other respects, they tended to the prejudice of no person whatsoever; that her imperial majesty had undoubtedly a right to form what judgment she pleased on the circumstances of the times; and likewise, that it belonged to none but herself to estimate her own danger; that her declaration was so clear, she never imagined it could be thought otherwise; that being accustomed to receive, as well as to practise, the decorums which sovereigns owe to each other, she could not hear without astonishment and sensibility the contents of the memorial now presented by M. de Klingraafe; so extraordinary both in the matter and expressions, that she would find herself under the necessity of transgressing the bounds of that moderation which she had prescribed to herself, were she to answer the whole of its contents;

nevertheless, she thought proper to declare, that the information communicated to his Prussian majesty, of an offensive alliance against him, subsisting between herself and the Empress of Russia, together with the circumstances and pretended stipulations of that alliance, was absolutely false and forged, for no such treaty did exist, or ever had existed. She concluded with observing, that this declaration would enable all Europe to judge of what weight and quality those dreadful events were which Klingraafe's memorial announced; and to perceive that, in any case, they could not be imputed to her imperial majesty. This answer, though seemingly explicit, was not deemed sufficiently categorical, or, at least, not suitable to the purposes of the King of Prussia, who, by his resident at Vienna, once more declared, that if the empress-queen would sign a positive assurance that she would not attack his Prussian majesty, either this year or the next, he would directly withdraw his troops, and let things be restored to their former footing. This demand was evaded, on pretence that such an assurance could not be more binding than the solemn treaty by which he was already secured; a treaty which the empress-queen had no intention to violate. But, before an answer could be delivered, the king had actually invaded Saxony, and published his declaration against the court of Vienna. The court of Vienna, believing that the King of Prussia was bent upon employing his arms somewhere; being piqued at the dictatorial manner in which his demands were conveyed; unwilling to lay themselves under further restrictions; apprehensive of giving umbrage to their allies, and confident of having provided for their own security, resolved to run the risk of his resentment, not without hopes of being indemnified, in the course of the war, for that part of Silesia which the queen had been obliged to cede in the treaty of Breslau.

THE PRUSSIAN ARMY ENTERS SAXONY. PRINCE FERDINAND TAKES LEIPSIC.

Both sides being thus prepared, and perhaps equally eager for action, the King of Prussia would no longer suspend his operations, and the storm fell first upon Saxony. He resolved to penetrate through that country into Bohemia, and even to take possession of it as a frontier, as well as for the convenience of ingress and egress to and from the Austrian dominions. Besides, he had reason to believe the King of Poland, Elector of Saxony, was connected with the czarina and the empress-queen; therefore, he thought it would be impolitic to leave that prince in any condition to give him the least disturbance. His army entered the Saxon territory towards the latter end of August, when he published a declaration, importing that the unjust conduct and dangerous views of the court of Vienna against his majesty's dominions laid him under the necessity of taking proper measures for protecting his territories and subjects; that for this purpose he could not forbear taking the disagreeable resolution to enter with his troops the hereditary dominions of his majesty the King of Poland, Elector of Saxony; but he protested, before God and man, that, on account of his personal esteem and friendship for that prince, he would not have proceeded to this extremity, had he not been forced to it by the laws of war, the fatality of the present conjuncture, and the necessity of providing for the defence and security of his subjects. He reminded the public of the tenderness with which he had treated the Elector of Saxony, during the campaign of the year one thousand seven hundred and forty-four, and of the bad consequences resulting to that monarch from his engagements with the enemies of Prussia. He declared that the apprehensions of being exposed again to such en-

terprises had obliged him to take those precautions which prudence dictated: but he protested, in the most solemn manner, that he had no hostile views against his Polish majesty, or his dominions; that his troops did not enter Saxony as enemies, and he had taken care that they should observe the best order and the most exact discipline; that he desired nothing more ardently than the happy minute that should procure to him the satisfaction of restoring to his Polish majesty his hereditary dominions, which he had seized only as a sacred depositum. By his minister at Dresden, he had demanded a free passage for his forces through the Saxon dominions; and this the King of Poland was ready to grant, with reasonable limitations, to be settled by commissaries appointed for that purpose. But these were formalities which did not at all suit with his Prussian majesty's disposition or design. Even before this requisition was made, a body of his troops, amounting to fifteen thousand, under the command of Prince Ferdinand, brother to the Duke of Brunswick, took possession of Leipsic, on the twentieth day of September. Here he published a declaration, signifying that it was his Prussian majesty's intention to consider and defend the inhabitants of that electorate as if they were his own subjects; and that he had given precise orders to his troops to observe the most exact discipline. As the first mark of his affection, he ordered them to provide the army with all sorts of provisions, according to a certain rate, on pain of military execution. That same evening notice was given to the corporation of merchants that their deputies should pay all taxes and customs to the King of Prussia; then he took possession of the custom-house and excise-office, and ordered the magazines of corn and meal to be opened for the use of his soldiers.

The King of Poland, apprehensive of such a visitation, had ordered all the troops of his electorate to leave

their quarters, and assemble in a strong camp marked out for them, between Pirna and Konigstein, which was intrenched, and provided with a numerous train of artillery. Thither the King of Poland repaired, with his two sons, Xaverius and Charles; but the queen and the rest of the royal family remained at Dresden. Of his capital, his Prussian majesty, with the bulk of the army, took possession on the eighth day of September, when he was visited by Lord Stormont, the English ambassador at that court, accompanied by Count Salmour, a Saxon minister, who, in his majesty's name, proposed a neutrality. The King of Prussia professed himself extremely well pleased with the proposal; and, as the most convincing proof of his neutrality, desired the King of Poland would separate his army, by ordering his troops to return to their former quarters. His Polish majesty did not like to be so tutored in his own dominions: he depended for his own safety more upon the valour and attachment of his troops thus assembled, than upon the friendship of a prince who had invaded his dominions and sequestered his revenue without provocation; and he trusted too much to the situation of his camp at Pirna, which was deemed impregnable. In the mean time, the King of Prussia fixed his head-quarters at Seidlitz, about half a German league distant from Pirna, and posted his army in such a manner as to be able to intercept all convoys of provisions designed for the Saxon camp: his forces extended on the right toward the frontiers of Bohemia, and the vanguard actually seized the passes that lead to the circles of Satzer and Leumeritz, in that kingdom; while Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick marched with a body of troops along the Elbe, and took post at this last place without opposition. At the same time, the king covered his own dominions, by assembling two considerable bodies in Upper and Lower Silesia, which occupied the passes that communicated with the circles

of Buntzlau and Koningsgratz. Hostilities were commenced on the thirteenth day of September, by a detachment of Prussian hussars, who attacked an Austrian escort to a convoy of provisions, designed for the Saxon camp; and having routed them, carried off a considerable number of loaded waggons. The magazines at Dresden were filled with an immense quantity of provisions and forage for the Prussian army, and the bakers were ordered to prepare a vast quantity of bread, for which purpose thirty new ovens were erected. When the King of Prussia first arrived at Dresden, he lodged at the house of the Countess Moczinska, and gave orders that the queen and royal family of Poland should be treated with all due veneration and respect[d]: even while the Saxon camp was blocked up on every side, he sometimes permitted a waggon, loaded with fresh provisions and game, to pass unmolested, for the use of his Polish majesty.

PRUSSIANS PENETRATE INTO BOHEMIA. BATTLE OF LOWOSCHUTZ.

During these transactions, the greatest part of the Prussian army advanced into Bohemia, under the command of Veldt-Mareschal Keith[e], who reduced the town and palace of Tetchen, took possession of all the passes, and encamped near Aussig, a small town in Bohemia, at no great distance from the imperial army, amounting to fifty thousand men, commanded by Count Brown, an officer of Irish extract, who had often distinguished himself in the field by his courage, vigilance, and conduct. His Prussian majesty, having left a considerable body of troops for the blockade of Pirna,

[d] See note [L], vol. vi.

[e] Brother to the Earl Mareschal of Scotland, a gentleman who had signalized himself as a general in the Russian army, and was accounted one of the best officers of the time; not more admired for his warlike genius than amiable in his disposition.

assumed in person the command of Mareschal Keith's corps, and advanced to give battle to the enemy. On the twenty-ninth day of September he formed his troops in two columns, and in the evening arrived with his van at Wolmina, from whence he saw the Austrian army posted with its right at Lowoschutz, and its left towards the Egra. Having occupied with six battalions a hollow way, and some rising grounds, which commanded the town of Lowoschutz, he remained all night under arms at Wolmina; and on the first day of October, early in the morning, formed his whole army in order of battle: the first line, consisting of the infantry, occupying two hills, and a bottom betwixt them; the second line being formed of some battalions, and the third composed of the whole cavalry. The Austrian general had taken possession of Lowoschutz, with a great body of infantry, and placed a battery of cannon in front of the town: he had formed his cavalry chequer-wise, in a line between Lowoschutz, and the village of Sanschitz; and posted about two thousand Croats and irregulars in the vineyards and avenues on his right. The morning was darkened with a thick fog, which vanished about seven: then the Prussian cavalry advanced to attack the enemy's horse; but received such a fire from the irregulars, posted in vineyards and ditches, as well as from a numerous artillery, that they were obliged to retire for protection to the rear of the Prussian infantry and cannon. There being formed and led back to the charge, they made an impression on the Austrian cavalry, and drove the irregulars, and other bodies of infantry, from the ditches, defiles, and vineyards which they possessed; but they suffered so severely in this dangerous service, that the king ordered them to reascend the hill, and take post again behind the infantry, from whence they no more advanced. In the mean time, a furious cannonading was maintained on both sides with considerable effect. At length the

left of the Prussian infantry was ordered to attack the town of Lowoschutz in flank; but met with a very warm reception, and in all likelihood would have miscarried, had not Veldt-Mareschal Keith headed them in person; when he drew his sword, and told them he would lead them on, he was given to understand, that all their powder and shot were exhausted; he turned immediately to them with a cheerful countenance, said he was very glad they had no more ammunition, being well assured the enemy could not withstand them at push of bayonet; so saying, he advanced at their head, and, driving the Austrians from Lowoschutz, set the suburbs on fire. The infantry had been already obliged to quit the eminence on the right; and now their whole army retired to Budin, on the other side of the Egra. Some prisoners, colours, and pieces of cannon, were taken on both sides; and the loss of each might amount to two thousand five hundred killed and wounded: so that, on the whole, it was a drawn battle, though both generals claimed the victory. The detail of the action, published at Berlin, declares, that the King of Prussia not only gained the battle, but that same day established his head-quarters at Lowoschutz: whereas the Austrian gazette affirms, that the Mareschal Count Brown obliged his Prussian majesty to retire, and remained all night on the field of battle; but next day, finding his troops in want of water, he repaired to the camp at Budin. If the battle was at all decisive, the advantage certainly fell to the Austrians; for his Prussian majesty, who, in all probability, had hoped to winter at Prague, was obliged, by the opposition he met with, to resign this plan, and retreat before winter into the electorate of Saxony.

SAXON ARMY SURRENDERS.

The Prussian army having rejoined that body which had been left to block up the Saxons at Pirna, his Polish majesty and his troops were reduced to such extremity of want, that it became indispensably necessary either to attempt an escape, or surrender to the King of Prussia. The former part of the alternative was chosen, and the plan concerted with Count Brown, the Austrian general, who, in order to facilitate the execution, advanced privately with a body of troops to Lichtendorf, near Schandeau; but the junction could not be effected. On the fourteenth day of October the Saxons threw a bridge of boats over the Elbe, near Konigstein, to which castle they removed all their artillery; then striking their tents in the night, passed the river undiscovered by the enemy. They continued to retreat with all possible expedition; but the roads were so bad, they made little progress. Next day, when part of them had advanced about half way up a hill opposite to Konigstein, and the rest were entangled in a narrow plain, where there was no room to act, they perceived that the Prussians were in possession of all the passes, and found themselves surrounded on every side, fainting with hunger and fatigue, and destitute of every convenience. In this deplorable condition they remained, when the King of Poland, from the fortress of Konigstein, sent a letter to his general, the Veldt-Mareschal Count Rutowski, vesting him with full and discretionary power to surrender, or take such other measures as he should judge most conducive to the preservation of the officers and soldiers[f]. By this time Count Brown had retired to Budin, so that there was no choice left. A capitulation was demanded: but, in effect, the whole Saxon army was obliged to surrender

[f] See note [M], vol. vi.

at discretion; and the soldiers were afterwards, by compulsion, incorporated with the troops of Prussia. The King of Poland being thus deprived of his electoral dominions, his troops, arms, artillery, and ammunition, thought it high time to provide for his own safety, and retired with all expedition to Poland. His Prussian majesty cantoned his forces in the neighbourhood of Seidlitz, and along the Elbe towards Dresden. His other army, which had entered Bohemia, under the command of the Count de Ichwerin, retired to the confines of the county of Glatz, where they were distributed in quarters of cantonment; so that this short campaign was finished by the beginning of November.

KING OF POLAND'S MEMORIAL TO THE STATES-GENERAL.

The King of Poland, in his distress, did not fail to implore the assistance and mediation of neutral powers. His minister at the Hague presented a memorial to the States-General, complaining, that the invasion of Saxony was one of those attacks against the law of nations, which, from the great respect due to this law, demanded the assistance of every power interested in the preservation of its own liberty and independency. He observed that, from the first glimpse of misunderstanding between the courts of Vienna and Berlin, he had expressly enjoined his ministers in all the courts of Europe to declare, that it was his firm resolution, in the present conjuncture of affairs, to observe the strictest neutrality. He represented that a free and neutral state had been, in the midst of peace, invaded by an enemy, who disguised himself under the mask of friendship, without alleging the least complaint, or any pretension whatsoever; but, founding himself solely on his own convenience, made himself master, by armed force, of all the cities and towns of the electorate, dismantling some, and

fortifying others: that he had disarmed the burghers; carried off the magistrates as hostages for the payment of unjust and enormous contributions of provisions and forage; seized the coffers and confiscated the revenues of the electorate, broke open the arsenals, and transported the arms and artillery to his own town of Magdeburgh; abolished the privy-council, and, instead of the lawful government, established a directory, which acknowledged no other law but his own arbitrary will. He gave them to understand, that all these proceedings were no other than preliminaries to the unheard-of treatment which was reserved for a queen, whose virtues ought to have commanded respect, even from her enemies: that from the hands of that august princess, the archives of the state were forced away by menaces and violences, notwithstanding the security which her majesty had promised herself under the protection of all laws, human and divine; and notwithstanding the repeated assurances given by the King of Prussia, that not only her person, and the place of her residence, should be absolutely safe, but that even the Prussian garrison should be under her direction. He observed, that a prince who declared himself protector of the protestant religion had begun the war by crushing the very state to which that religion owes its establishment, and the preservation of its most invaluable rights: that he had broke through the most respectable laws which constitute the union of the Germanic body, under colour of a defence which the empire stood in no need of except against himself: that the King of Prussia, while he insists on having entered Saxony as a friend, demands his army, the administration of his dominions, and, in a word, the sacrifice of his whole electorate; and that the Prussian directory, in the declaration of motives, published under the nose of a prince to whom friendship was pretended, thought it superfluous to allege even any pretext, to colour the usurpation of his

territories and revenues.—Though this was certainly the case in his Prussian majesty's first exposition of motives, the omission was afterwards supplied, in a subsequent memorial to the States-General; in which he charged the King of Poland, as an accomplice in, if not an accessary to, the treaty of Petersburgh; and even taxed him with having agreed to a partition of some Prussian territories, when they should be conquered. This treaty of partition, however, appears to have been made in time of actual war, before all cause of dispute was removed by the peace of Dresden.

IMPERIAL DECREES PUBLISHED AGAINST THE KING OF PRUSSIA.

While the Austrian and Prussian armies were in the field, their respective ministers were not idle at Ratisbon, where three imperial decrees were published against his Prussian majesty: the first summoning that prince to withdraw his troops from the electorate of Saxony; the second commanding all the vassals of the empire employed by the King of Prussia to quit that service immediately; and the third forbidding the members of the empire to suffer any levies of soldiers, for the Prussian service, to be raised within their respective jurisdictions. The French minister declared to the diet, that the proceedings of his Prussian majesty having disclosed to the world the project concerted between that prince and the King of England, to excite in the empire a religious war, which might be favourable to their particular views, his most christian majesty, in consequence of his engagement with the empress-queen, and many other princes of the empire, being resolved to succour them in the most efficacious manner, would forthwith send such a number of troops to their aid, as might be thought necessary to preserve the liberty of the Germanic body. On the other hand, the Prussian

minister assured the diet, that his master would very soon produce the proofs that were come to his hands of the plan concerted by the courts of Vienna and Dresden, for the subversion of his electoral house, and for imposing upon him a yoke, which seemed to threaten the whole empire.

DECLARATIONS OF DIFFERENT POWERS.

About the same time, the Russian resident at the Hague communicated to the States-General a declaration from his mistress, importing that her imperial majesty having seen a memorial presented at the court of Vienna by the King of Prussia's envoy extraordinary, was thereby convinced that his Prussian majesty's intention was to attack the territories of the empress-queen; in which case, she (the czarina) was inevitably obliged to succour her ally with all her forces; for which end she had ordered all her troops in Livonia to be forthwith assembled on the frontiers, and hold themselves in readiness to march: that, moreover, the Russian Admiralty had been enjoined to provide immediately a sufficient number of galleys for transporting a large body of troops to Lubeck. The ministers of the empress-queen, both at the Hague and at London, delivered memorials to the States-General and his Britannic majesty, demanding the succours which these two powers were bound to afford the house of Austria by the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle; but their high mightinesses kept warily aloof, by dint of evasion, and the King of Great Britain was far otherwise engaged. The invasion of Saxony had well nigh produced tragedies in the royal family of France. The dauphiness, who was far advanced in her pregnancy, no sooner learned the distressful circumstances of her parents, the King and Queen of Poland, than she was seized with violent fits, which occasioned a miscarriage, and

brought her life into the most imminent danger. The Prussian minister was immediately ordered to quit Versailles; and directions were despatched to the French minister at Berlin, to retire from that court without taking leave. Finally, the Emperor of Germany concluded a new convention with the French king, regulating the succours to be derived from that quarter: he claimed, in all the usual forms, the assistance of the Germanic body, as guarantee of the pragmatic sanction and treaty of Dresden; and Sweden was also addressed on the same subject.

HIS PRUSSIAN MAJESTY'S ANSWER TO THE SAXON MEMORIAL.

The King of Prussia did not passively bear all the imputations that were fixed upon his conduct. His minister at the Hague presented a memorial, in answer to that of the Saxon resident, in which he accused the court of Dresden of having adopted every part of the scheme which his enemies had formed for his destruction. He affirmed that the Saxon ministers had, in all the courts of Europe, played off every engine of unwarrantable politics, in order to pave the way for the execution of their project: that they had endeavoured to give an odious turn to his most innocent actions: that they had spared neither malicious insinuations, nor even the most atrocious calumnies, to alienate all the world from his majesty, and raise up enemies against him every where. He said he had received information that the court of Saxony intended to let his troops pass freely, and afterwards wait for events of which they might avail themselves, either by joining his enemies, or making a diversion in his dominions: that in such a situation he could not avoid having recourse to the only means which were left him for preventing his inevitable ruin, by putting it out of the power of Saxony

to increase the number of his enemies. He asserted, that all the measures he had pursued in that electorate were but the necessary consequences of the first resolution he was forced to take for his own preservation: that he had done nothing but deprived the court of Saxony of the means of hurting him; and this had been done with all possible moderation: that the country enjoyed all the security and all the quiet which could be expected in the very midst of peace, the Prussian troops observing the most exact discipline: that all due respect was shown to the Queen of Poland, who had been prevailed upon, by the most suitable representations, to suffer some papers to be taken from the paper-office, of which his Prussian majesty already had copies; and thought it necessary to ascertain the dangerous design of the Saxon ministry against him, to secure the originals; the existence and reality of which might otherwise have been denied. He observed, that every man has a right to prevent the mischief with which he is threatened, and to retort it upon its author; and that neither the constitutions nor the laws of the empire could obstruct the exertion of a right so superior to all others as that of self-preservation and self-defence; especially when the depository of these laws is so closely united to the enemy, as manifestly to abuse his power in her favour.

But the most important step which his Prussian majesty took in his own justification was that of publishing another memorial, specifying the conduct of the courts of Vienna and Saxony, and their dangerous designs against his person and interest, together with the original documents adduced as proofs of these sinister intentions. As a knowledge of these pieces is requisite to form a distinct idea of the motives which produced the dreadful war upon the Continent, it will not be amiss to usher the substance of them to the reader's acquaintance. His Prussian majesty affirms, that to

arrive at the source of the vast plan upon which the courts of Vienna and Saxony had been employed against him ever since the peace of Dresden, we must trace it as far back as the war which preceded this peace: that the fond hopes which the two allied courts had conceived upon the success of the campaign in the year one thousand seven hundred and forty-four, gave occasion to a treaty of eventual partition, stipulating that the court of Vienna should possess the duchy of Silesia and the county of Glatz; while the King of Poland, Elector of Saxony, should share the duchies of Magdeburgh and Croissen; the circles of Zullichow and Swibus, together with the Prussian part of Lusatia: that after the peace of Dresden, concluded in the year one thousand seven hundred and forty-five, there was no further room for a treaty of this nature: yet the court of Vienna proposed to that of Saxony a new alliance, in which the treaty of eventual partition should be renewed: but this last thought it necessary, in the first place, to give a greater consistency to their plan, by grounding it upon an alliance between the empress-queen and the czarina. Accordingly, these two powers did, in fact, conclude a defensive alliance at Petersburgh in the course of the ensuing year; but the body, or ostensible part of this treaty, was composed merely with a view to conceal from the knowledge of the public six secret articles, the fourth of which was levelled singly against Prussia, according to the exact copy of it, which appeared among the documents. In this article, the Empress-Queen of Hungary and Bohemia sets out with a protestation, that she will religiously observe the treaty of Dresden; but explains her real way of thinking upon the subject, a little lower, in the following terms: "If the King of Prussia should be the first to depart from the peace, by attacking either her majesty the Empress-Queen of Hungary and Bohemia, or her majesty the Empress of Russia, or even the republic of

Poland; in all these cases, the rights of the empress-queen to Silesia and the county of Glatz would again take place, and recover their full effect: the two contracting parties should mutually assist each other with sixty thousand men to achieve these conquests." The king observes upon this article, that every war which can arise between him and Russia, or the republic of Poland, would be looked upon as a manifest infraction of the peace of Dresden, and a revival of the rights of the house of Austria to Silesia; though neither Russia nor the republic of Poland is at all concerned in the treaty of Dresden; and though the latter, with which the king lived in the most intimate friendship, was not even in alliance with the court of Vienna: that according to the principles of the law of nature, received among all civilized nations, the most the court of Vienna could be authorized to do in such cases would be to send those succours to her allies which are due to them by treaties, without her having the least pretence, on that account, to free herself from the particular engagements subsisting between her and the king: he appealed, therefore, to the judgment of the impartial world, whether in this secret article the contracting powers had kept within the bounds of a defensive alliance; or whether this article did not rather contain a plan of an offensive alliance against the King of Prussia. He affirmed it was obvious, from this article, that the court of Vienna had prepared three pretences for the recovery of Silesia; and that she thought to attain her end, either by provoking the king to commence hostilities against her, or to kindle a war between his majesty and Russia, by her secret intrigues and machinations: he alleged that the court of Saxony, being invited to accede to this alliance, eagerly accepted the invitation; furnished its ministers at Petersburgh with full powers for that purpose; and ordered them to declare that their master was not only ready to ac-

cede to the treaty itself, but also to the secret article against Prussia; and to join in the regulations made by the two courts, provided effectual measures should be taken, as well for the security of Saxony, as for its indemnification and recompense, in proportion to the efforts and progress that might be made: that the court of Dresden declared, if upon any fresh attack from the King of Prussia, the empress-queen should, by their assistance, not only reconquer Silesia, and the county of Glatz, but also reduce him within narrow bounds, the King of Poland, as Elector of Saxony, would abide by the partition formerly stipulated between him and the empress-queen. He also declared that Count Loss, the Saxon minister at Vienna, was charged to open a private negotiation for settling an eventual partition of the conquest which might be made on Prussia, by laying down, as the basis of it, the treaty of Leipsic, signed on the eighteenth day of May, in the year one thousand seven hundred and forty-five, as would appear by the documents affixed. He owned it had been supposed, through the whole of this negotiation, that the King of Prussia should be the aggressor against the court of Vienna; but he insisted, that even in this case the King of Poland could have no right to make conquests on his Prussian majesty. He likewise acknowledged, that the court of Saxony had not yet acceded in form to the treaty of Petersburgh; but he observed, its allies were given to understand again and again, that it was ready to accede without restriction, whenever this could be done without risk, and the advantages to be gained should be secured in its favour; circumstances proved by divers authentic documents, particularly by a letter from Count Fleming to Count de Bruhl, informing him that Count Uhlefield had charged him to represent afresh to his court, that they could not take too secure measures against the ambitious views of the King of Prussia; that Saxony in particular ought to be

cautious, as being the most exposed; that it was of the highest importance to strengthen their old engagements, upon the footing proposed by the late Count de Harrach, in the year one thousand seven hundred and forty-five; a step which might be taken on occasion of his Polish majesty's accession to the treaty of Petersburgh. The answer of Count Bruhl to this despatch imported, that the King of Poland was not averse to treat in the utmost secrecy with the court of Vienna about succours, by private and confidential declarations relating to the fourth secret article of the treaty of Petersburgh, on condition of reasonable terms and advantages, which in this case ought to be granted to his majesty. He quoted other despatches to prove the unwillingness of his Polish majesty to declare himself, until the King of Prussia should be attacked, and his forces divided; and that this scruple was admitted by the allies of Saxony. From these premises he deduced this inference, that the court of Dresden, without having acceded in form to the treaty of Petersburgh, was not less an accomplice in the dangerous designs which the court of Vienna had grounded upon this treaty; and that having been dispensed with from a formal concurrence, it had only waited for that moment when it might, without running any great risk, conquer in effect, and share the spoils of its neighbour. In expectation of this period, he said, the Austrian and Saxon ministers laboured in concert and underhand with the more ardour, to bring the *casus fœderis* into existence: for it being laid down as a principle in the treaty, that any war whatever between him and Russia would authorize the empress-queen to take Silesia, there was nothing more to be done but to kindle such a war; for which purpose no method was found more proper than that of embroiling the king with the Empress of Russia; and to provoke that princess with all sorts of false insinuations, impostures, and the most atrocious

calumnies, in laying to his majesty's charge a variety of designs, sometimes against Russia, and even the person of the czarina; sometimes views upon Poland, and sometimes intrigues in Sweden. By these and other such contrivances, he affirmed they had kindled the animosity of the empress to such a degree, that in a council held in the month of October, in the year one thousand seven hundred and fifty-three, she had resolved to attack the King of Prussia, without any further discussion, whether he should fall upon any of the allies of Russia, or one of them should begin with him; a resolution which for that time was frustrated by their want of seamen and magazines; but the preparations were continued under pretence of keeping themselves in a condition to fulfil their engagements, contracted in the last subsidiary convention with England; and when all were finished, the storm would fall on the King of Prussia.

This is the substance of that famous memorial published by his Prussian majesty, to which the justifying pieces or authentic documents were annexed; and to which a circumstantial answer was exhibited by the partisans of her imperial majesty. Specious reasons may, doubtless, be adduced on either side of almost any dispute, by writers of ingenuity; but, in examining this contest, it must be allowed that both sides adopted illicit practices. The empress-queen and the Elector of Saxony had certainly a right to form defensive treaties for their own preservation; and, without all doubt, it was their interest and their duty to secure themselves from the enterprises of such a formidable neighbour; but, at the same time, the contracting parties seem to have carried their views much farther than defensive measures. Perhaps the court of Vienna considered the cession of Silesia as a circumstance altogether compulsive, and, therefore, not binding against the rights of natural equity. She did not at all doubt that the King

of Prussia would be tempted, by his ambition and great warlike power, to take some step which might be justly interpreted into an infraction of the treaty of Dresden; and in that case she was determined to avail herself of the confederacy she had formed, that she might retrieve the countries she had lost by the unfortunate events of the last war, as well as bridle the dangerous power and disposition of the Prussian monarch; and, in all probability, the King of Poland, over and above the same consideration, was desirous of some indemnification for the last irruption into his electoral dominions, and the great sums he had paid for the subsequent peace. Whether they were authorized by the law of nature and nations to make reprisals by an actual partition of the countries they might conquer, supposing him to be the aggressor, we shall not pretend to determine; but it does not at all appear that his Prussian majesty's danger was such as entitled him to take those violent steps which he now attempted to justify. By this time the flame of war was kindled up to a blaze that soon filled the empire with ruin and desolation; and the King of Prussia had drawn upon himself the resentment of the three greatest powers in Europe, who laid aside their former animosities, and every consideration of that balance which it had cost such blood and treasure to preserve, in order to conspire his destruction. The king himself could not but foresee this confederacy and know the power it might exert; but probably he confided so much in the number, the valour, and discipline of his troops, in the skill of his officers, in his own conduct and activity, that he hoped to crush the house of Austria by one rapid endeavour at the latter end of the season, or at least establish himself in Bohemia, before her allies could move to her assistance. In this hope, however, he was disappointed by the vigilance of the Austrian councils. He found the empress-queen in a condition to make head against him in every avenue

to her dominions; and in a fair way of being assisted by the circles of the empire. He saw himself threatened with the vengeance of the Russian empress, and the sword of France gleaming over his head, without any prospect of assistance but that which he might derive from his alliance with Great Britain. Thus the King of England exchanged the alliance of Russia, who was his subsidiary, and the friendship of the empress-queen, his old and natural ally, for a new connexion with his Prussian majesty, who could neither act as an auxiliary to Great Britain, nor as a protector to Hanover; and for this connexion, the advantage of which was merely negative, such a price was paid by England as had never been given by any other potentate of Europe, even for services of the greatest importance.

DISPUTES BETWEEN THE PARLIAMENT OF PARIS AND THE CLERGY.

About the latter end of November, the Saxon minister at Ratisbon delivered to the diet a new and ample memorial, explaining the lamentable state of that electorate, and imploring afresh the assistance of the empire. The King of Prussia had also addressed a letter to the diet, demanding succour of the several states, agreeable to their guarantees of the treaties of Westphalia and Dresden; but the minister of Mentz, as director of the diet, having refused to lay it before that assembly, the minister of Brandenburgh ordered it to be printed, and sent to his court for further instructions. In the mean time his Prussian majesty thought proper to intimate to the king and senate of Poland, that should the Russian troops be permitted to march through that kingdom, they might expect to see their country made a scene of war and desolation. In France, the prospect of a general and sanguinary

war did not at all allay the disturbance which sprang from the dissension between the clergy and Parliament, touching the bull Unigenitus. The king being again brought over to the ecclesiastical side of the dispute, received a brief from the pope, laying it down as a fundamental article, that whosoever refuses to submit to the bull Unigenitus is in the way of damnation; and certain cases are specified, in which the sacraments are to be denied. The Parliament of Paris, considering this brief or bull as a direct attack upon the rights of the Gallican church, issued an arrêt or decree, suppressing the said bull; reserving to themselves the right of providing against the inconveniences with which it might be attended; as well as the privilege to maintain in their full force the prerogatives of the crown, the power and jurisdiction of the bishops, the liberties of the Gallican church, and the customs of the realm. The king, dissatisfied with their interposition, declared his design to hold a bed of justice in person at the palace. Accordingly, on the twelfth day of November, the whole body of his guards, amounting to ten thousand men, took post in the city of Paris; and next day the king repaired with the usual ceremony to the palace, where the bed of justice was held: among other regulations, an edict was issued for suppressing the fourth and fifth chambers of inquests, the members of which had remarkably distinguished themselves by their opposition to the bull Unigenitus.

DEARTH OF CORN IN ENGLAND.

In England, the dearth of corn, arising in a great measure from the iniquitous practice of engrossing, was so severely felt by the common people, that insurrections were raised in Shropshire and Warwickshire by the populace, in conjunction with the colliers, who seized by violence all the provision they could find; pillaging

without distinction the millers, farmers, grocers, and butchers, until they were dispersed by the gentlemen of the country, at the head of their tenants and dependants. Disorders of the same nature were excited by the colliers on the forest of Dean, and those employed in the works in Cumberland. The corporations, noblemen, and gentlemen, in different parts of the kingdom, exerted themselves for the relief of the poor, who were greatly distressed; and a grand council being assembled at St. James's on the same subject, a proclamation was published for putting the laws in speedy and effectual execution against the forestallers and engrossers of corn.

The fear of an invasion having now subsided, and Hanover being supposed in greater danger than Great Britain, the auxiliaries of that electorate were transported from England to their own country. At the latter end of the season, when the weather became severe, the innkeepers of England refused to admit the Hessian soldiers into winter quarters, as no provision had been made for that purpose by act of Parliament; so that they were obliged to hut their camp, and remain in the open fields till January; but the rigour of this uncomfortable situation was softened by the hand of generous charity, which liberally supplied them with all manner of refreshment, and other conveniences; an humane interposition, which rescued the national character from the imputation of cruelty and ingratitude.

SESSION OPENED.

On the second day of December, his majesty opened the session of Parliament with a speech that seemed to be dictated by the genius of England. He expressed his confidence, that, under the guidance of Divine Providence, the union, fortitude, and affection of his people

would enable him to surmount all difficulties, and vindicate the dignity of his crown against the ancient enemy of Great Britain. He declared, that the succour and preservation of America constituted a main object of his attention and solicitude; and observed, that the growing dangers to which the British colonies might stand exposed, from late losses in that country, demanded resolutions of vigour and despatch. He said, an adequate and firm defence at home should maintain the chief place in his thoughts; and in this great view he had nothing so much at heart as to remove all grounds of dissatisfaction from his people: for this end, he recommended to the care and diligence of the Parliament the framing of a national militia, planned and regulated with equal regard to the just rights of his crown and people; an institution which might become one good resource in time of general danger. He took notice that the unnatural union of councils abroad, the calamities which, in consequence of this unhappy conjunction, might, by irruptions of foreign armies into the empire, shake its constitution, overturn its system, and threaten oppression to the protestant interest on the Continent, were events which must sensibly affect the minds of the British nation, and had fixed the eyes of Europe on this new and dangerous crisis. He gave them to understand that the body of his electoral troops, which were brought hither at the desire of his Parliament, he had now directed to return to his dominions in Germany, relying with pleasure on the spirit and zeal of his people in defence of his person and realm. He told the Commons that he confided in their wisdom for preferring more vigorous efforts, though more expensive, to a less effectual and therefore less frugal plan of war; that he had placed before them the dangers and necessities of the public; and it was their duty to lay the burthens they should judge unavoidable in such a manner as would least disturb and exhaust his people.

He expressed his concern for the sufferings of the poor, arising from the present dearth of corn, and for the disturbance to which it had given rise; and exhorted his Parliament to consider of proper provisions for preventing the like mischiefs hereafter. He concluded with remarking, that unprosperous events of war in the Mediterranean had drawn from his subjects signal proofs how dearly they tendered the honour of his crown; therefore, they could not, on his part, fail to meet with just returns of unwearied care, and unceasing endeavours for the glory, prosperity, and happiness of his people.

DEBATES ON THE ADDRESS.

The king having retired from the House of Peers, the speech was read by Lord Sandys, appointed to act as speaker to that house; then Earl Gower moved for an address, which, however, was not carried without objection. In one part of it his majesty was thanked for having caused a body of electoral troops to come into England at the request of his Parliament; and this article was disagreeable to those who had disapproved of the request in the last session. They said they wished to see the present address unanimously agreed to by the Lords; a satisfaction they could not have if such a paragraph should be inserted; for they still thought the bringing over Hanoverian troops a preposterous measure; because it had not only loaded the nation with an enormous expense, but also furnished the court of France with a plausible pretence for invading the electorate, which otherwise it would have no shadow of reason to attack; besides, the expedient was held in reprobation by the subjects in general, and such a paragraph might be considered as an insult on the people. Notwithstanding these exceptions, which did not seem

to be very important, the address, including the paragraph, was approved by a great majority.

BILL PASSED FOR PROHIBITING THE EXPORTATION OF CORN.

In the address of the Commons no such paragraph was inserted. As soon as the speaker had recited his majesty's speech, Mr. C. Townshend proposed the heads of an address, to which the House unanimously agreed; and it was presented accordingly. This necessary form was no sooner discussed, than the House, with a warmth of humanity and benevolence suitable to such an assembly, resolved itself into a committee, to deliberate on that part of his majesty's speech which related to the dearth of corn, that so much distressed the poorer class of people. A bill was immediately framed to prohibit, for a time limited, the exportation of corn, malt, meal, flour, bread, biscuit, and starch; and a resolution unanimously taken to address the sovereign, that an embargo might be forthwith laid upon all ships laden or to be laden with these commodities to be exported from the ports of Great Britain and Ireland. At the same time, Vice-Admiral Boscawen, from the board of Admiralty, informed the House, that the king and the board having been dissatisfied with the conduct of Admiral Byng, in a late action with the French fleet in the Mediterranean, and for the appearance of his not having acted agreeably to his instructions for the relief of Minorca, he was then in custody of the marshal of the Admiralty, in order to be tried by a court-martial: that although this was no more than what was usual in like cases, yet as Admiral Byng was then a member of the House, and as his confinement might detain him some time from his duty there, the board of Admiralty thought it a respect due to the House to inform them

of the commitment and detainer of the said admiral. This message being delivered, the journal of the House in relation to Rear-Admiral Knowles[g] was read, and what Mr. Boscawen now communicated was also inserted.

The committees of supply, and of ways and means, being appointed, took into consideration the necessities of the state, and made very ample provision for enabling his majesty to maintain the war with vigour. They granted fifty-five thousand men for the sea service, including eleven thousand four hundred and nineteen marines; and for the land service forty-nine thousand seven hundred and forty-nine effective men, comprehending four thousand and eight invalids. The supply was granted for the maintenance of these forces, as well as for the troops of Hesse and Hanover; for the ordnance; the levy of new regiments; for assisting his majesty in forming and maintaining an army of observation, for the just and necessary defence and preservation of his electoral dominions, and those of his allies, and towards enabling him to fulfil his engagements with the King of Prussia; for the security of the empire against the irruption of foreign[h] armies, as well as for the support of the common cause; for building and repairs of ships, hiring transports, payment of half-pay officers, and the pensions of widows; for enabling his majesty to discharge the like sum, raised in pursuance of an act passed in the last session of Parliament, and charged upon the first aids or supplies to be granted in this session; for enabling the governors and guardians of the hospital for the maintenance and education of exposed and deserted young children to receive all such

[g] See note [N], vol. vi.

[h] Nothing could more gloriously evince the generosity of a British Parliament than this interposition for defending the liberties of Germany, in conjunction with two electors only against the sense of the other seven, and in direct opposition to the measures taken by the head of the empire, who, in the sequel, stigmatized these two princes as rebels, and treated one of them as an outlaw.

children, under a certain age, as should be brought to the said hospital within the compass of one year[i]; for maintaining and supporting the new settlement of Nova Scotia; for repairing and finishing military roads; for making good his majesty's engagements with the Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel; for the expense of marching, recruiting, and remounting German troops in the pay of Great Britain; for empowering his majesty to defray any extraordinary expenses of the war, incurred or to be incurred for the service of the ensuing year, and to take all such measures as might be necessary to disappoint or defeat any enterprises or designs of his enemies, as the exigency of affairs should require; for the payment of such persons, in such a manner as his majesty should direct, for the use and relief of his subjects in the several provinces of North and South Carolina and Virginia, in recompense for such services as, with the approbation of his majesty's commander-in-chief in America, they respectively had performed, or should perform, either by putting these provinces in a state of defence, or by acting with vigour against the enemy; for enabling the East India company to defray the expense of a military force in their settlements, to be maintained in them, in lieu of a battalion of his majesty's forces withdrawn from those forts and factories; for the maintenance and support of the forts on the coast of Africa; for widening the avenues, and rendering more safe and commodious the streets and passages leading from Charing-cross to the two Houses of Parliament, the courts of justice, and the new bridge at

[i] This charity, established by voluntary contribution, might, under proper restrictions, prove beneficial to the commonwealth, by rescuing deserted children from misery and death, and qualifying them for being serviceable members of the community; but since the liberality of Parliament hath enabled the governors and corporation to receive all the children that are presented, without question or limitation, the yearly expense hath swelled into a national grievance, and the humane purposes of the original institution are, in a great measure, defeated. Instead of an asylum for poor forlorn orphans and abandoned foundlings, it is become a general receptacle for the offspring of the dissolute, who care not to work for the maintenance of their

Westminster[k]. Such were the articles under which we may specify the supplies of this year, on the whole amounting to eight millions three hundred fifty thousand three hundred and twenty-five pounds, nine shillings, and three-pence. It must be acknowledged, for the honour of the administration, that the House of Commons could not have exhibited stronger marks of their attachment to the crown and person of their sovereign, as well as of their desire to see the force of the nation exerted with becoming spirit. The sums granted by the committee of supply did not exceed eight millions three hundred fifty thousand three hundred twenty-five pounds, nine shillings, and three-pence; the funds established amounted to eight millions six hundred eighty-nine thousand fifty-one pounds, nineteen shillings, and seven-pence; so that there was an overplus of three hundred thirty-eight thousand seven hundred and twenty-six pounds, ten shillings, and four-pence; an excess which was thought necessary, in case the lottery, which was founded on a new plan, should not succeed.

REFLECTIONS ON THE CONTINENTAL WAR.

Some of these impositions were deemed grievous hardships by those upon whom they immediately fell; and many friends of their country exclaimed against the projected army of observation in Germany, as the commencement of a ruinous continental war, which it was neither the interest of the nation to undertake, nor in

families. The hospital itself is a plain edifice, well contrived for economy and convenience, standing on the north side of the city, and a little detached from it, in an agreeable and salubrious situation. The hall is adorned with some good paintings, the chapel is elegant, and the regulations are admirable.

[k] The bridge at Westminster may be considered as a national ornament. It was built at the public expense, from the neighbourhood of Westminster-hall to the opposite side of the river, and consists of thirteen arches, constructed with equal elegance and simplicity.

their power to maintain, without starving the operations by sea, and in America, founded on British principles; without contracting such an additional load of debts and taxes, as could not fail to terminate in bankruptcy and distress. To those dependants of the ministry who observed that, as Hanover was threatened by France for its connexion with Great Britain, it ought, in common gratitude, to be protected, they replied, that every state, in assisting any ally, ought to have a regard to its own preservation: that, if the King of England enjoyed by inheritance, or succession, a province in the heart of France, it would be equally absurd and unjust, in case of a rupture with that kingdom, to exhaust the treasures of Great Britain in the defence of such a province; and yet the inhabitants of it would have the same right to complain that they suffered for their connexion with England. They observed, that other dominions, electorates, and principalities in Germany were secured by the constitutions of the empire, as well as by fair and equal alliances with their co-estates; whereas Hanover stood solitary, like a hunted deer avoided by the herd, and had no other shelter but that of shrinking under the extended shield of Great Britain: that the reluctance expressed by the German princes to undertake the defence of these dominions flowed from a firm persuasion, founded on experience, that England would interpose as a principal, and not only draw her sword against the enemies of the electorate, but concentrate her chief strength in that object, and waste her treasures in purchasing their concurrence: that exclusive of an ample revenue drained from the sweat of the people, great part of which had been expended in continental efforts, the whole national debt incurred, since the accession of the late king, had been contracted in pursuance of measures totally foreign to the interest of these kingdoms: that, since Hanover was the favourite object, England would save money, and great quantities of British blood, by

allowing France to take possession of the electorate, paying its ransom at the peace, and indemnifying the inhabitants for the damage they might sustain; an expedient that would be productive of another good consequence; it would rouse the German princes from their affected indifference, and oblige them to exert themselves with vigour, in order to avoid the detested neighbourhood of such an enterprising invader.

MESSAGES FROM THE KING TO THE PARLIAMENT.

The article of the supply relating to the army of observation took rise from a message signed by his majesty, and presented by Mr. Pitt, now promoted to the office of principal secretary of state; a gentleman who had, upon sundry occasions, combated the gigantic plan of continental connexions with all the strength of reason, and all the powers of eloquence. He now imparted to the House an intimation, importing, it was always with reluctance that his majesty asked extraordinary supplies of his people; but as the united councils and formidable preparations of France and her allies threatened Europe in general with the most alarming consequences; and as these unjust and vindictive designs were particularly and immediately bent against his majesty's electoral dominions, and those of his good ally, the King of Prussia, his majesty confided in the experienced zeal and affection of his faithful Commons, that they would cheerfully assist him in forming and maintaining an army of observation, for the just and necessary defence and preservation of those territories, and enable him to fulfil his engagements with his Prussian majesty, for the security of the empire against the irruption of foreign armies, and for the support of the common cause. Posterity will hardly believe, that the emperor and all the princes of Germany were in a

conspiracy against their country, except the King of Prussia, the Elector of Hanover, and the Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel; and they will, no doubt, be surprised, that Great Britain, after all the treaties she had made, and the numberless subsidies she had granted, should not have an ally left, except one prince, so embarrassed in his own affairs, that he could grant her no succour, whatever assistance he might demand. The king's message met with as favourable a reception as he could have desired. It was read in the House of Commons, together with a copy of the treaty between his majesty and the King of Prussia, including the secret and separate article, and the declaration signed on each side by the plenipotentiaries at Westminster: the request was granted, and the convention approved. With equal readiness did they gratify his majesty's inclination, signified in another message, delivered on the seventeenth day of May, by Lord Bateman, intimating, that in this critical juncture, emergencies might arise of the utmost importance, and be attended with the most pernicious consequences, if proper means should not be immediately applied to prevent or defeat them; his majesty was therefore desirous that the House would enable him to defray any extraordinary expenses of the war, incurred or to be incurred for the service of the current year; and to take all such measures as might be necessary to disappoint or defeat any enterprises or designs of his enemies, as the exigency of affairs might require. The committee of supply forthwith granted a very large sum for these purposes, including the charge of German mercenaries. A like message being at the same time communicated to the Upper House, their lordships voted a very loyal address upon the occasion; and when the article of supply, which it produced among the Commons, fell under their inspection, they unanimously agreed to it, by way of a clause of appropriation.

MEASURES TAKEN TO REMOVE THE SCARCITY OF CORN.

We have already observed, that the first bill which the Commons passed in this session was for the relief of the poor, by prohibiting the exportation of corn; but this remedy not being judged adequate to the evil, another bill was framed, removing, for a limited time, the duty then payable upon foreign corn and flour imported; as also permitting, for a certain time, all such foreign corn, grain, meal, bread, biscuit, and flour, as had been or should be taken from the enemy, to be landed and expended in the kingdom, duty free. In order still more to reduce the high price of corn, and to prevent any supply of provisions from being sent to our enemies in America, a third bill was brought in, prohibiting, for a time therein limited, the exportation of corn, grain, meal, malt, flour, bread, biscuit, starch, beef, pork, bacon, or other victual, from any of the British plantations, unless to Great Britain or Ireland, or from one colony to another. To this act two clauses were added, for allowing those necessaries, mentioned above, to be imported in foreign-built ships, and from any state in amity with his majesty, either into Great Britain or Ireland; and for exporting from Southampton or Exeter to the Isle of Man, for the use of the inhabitants, a quantity of wheat, barley, oats, meal, or flour, not exceeding two thousand five hundred quarters. The Commons would have still improved their humanity, had they contrived and established some effectual method to punish those unfeeling villains, who, by engrossing and hoarding up great quantities of grain, had created this artificial scarcity, and deprived their fellow-creatures of bread, with a view to their own private advantage. Upon a subsequent report of the committee, the House resolved, that, to prevent the high price of

wheat and bread, no spirits should be distilled from wheat for a limited time. While the bill formed on this resolution was in embryo, a petition was presented to the House by the brewers of London, Westminster, Southwark, and parts adjacent, representing, that, when the resolution passed, the price of malt, which was before too high, immediately rose to such a degree, that the petitioners found themselves utterly incapable of carrying on business at the price malt then bore, occasioned, as they conceived, from an apprehension of the necessity the distillers would be under to make use of the best pale malt, and substitute the best barley in lieu of wheat; that, in such a case, the markets would not be able to supply a sufficient quantity of barley for the demands of both professions, besides other necessary uses; they, therefore, prayed, that in regard to the public revenue, to which the trade of the petitioners so largely contributed, proper measures might be taken for preventing the public loss, and relieving their particular distress. The House would not lend a deaf ear to a remonstrance in which the revenue was concerned. The members appointed to prepare the bill immediately received instructions to make provision in it to restrain, for a limited time, the distilling of barley, malt, and all grain whatsoever. The bill was framed accordingly, but did not pass without strenuous opposition. To this prohibition it was objected, that there are always large quantities of wheat and barley in the kingdom so much damaged, as to be unfit for any use but the distillery; consequently a restriction of this nature would ruin many farmers, and others employed in the trade of malting. Particular interests, however, must often be sacrificed to the welfare of the community; and the present distress prevailed over the prospect of this disadvantage. If they had allowed any sort of grain to be distilled, it would have been impossible to prevent the distilling of every kind. The prohibition was limited

to two months; but, at the expiration of that term, the scarcity still continuing, it was protracted by a new bill to the eleventh day of December, with a proviso, empowering his majesty to put an end to it at any time after the eleventh day of May, if such a step should be judged for the advantage of the kingdom.

MILITIA BILL.

The next bill that engaged the attention of the Commons was a measure of the utmost national importance, though secretly disliked by many individuals of the legislature, who, nevertheless, did not venture to avow their disapprobation. The establishment of a militia was a very popular and desirable object, but attended with numberless difficulties, and a competition of interests which it was impossible to reconcile. It had formerly been an inexhaustible source of contention between the crown and the Commons; but now both apparently concurred in rendering it serviceable to the commonwealth, though some acquiesced in the scheme who were not at all hearty in its favour. On the fourth day of December, a motion was made for the bill, by Colonel George Townshend, eldest son of Lord Viscount Townshend, a gentleman of courage, sense, and probity; endued with penetration to discern, and honesty to pursue, the real interest of his country, in defiance of power, in contempt of private advantages. Leave being given to bring in a bill for the better ordering of the militia forces in the several counties in England, the task of preparing it was allotted to Mr. Townshend, and a considerable number of the most able members in the House, comprehending his own brother, Mr. Charles Townshend, whose genius shone with distinguished lustre: he was keen, discerning, eloquent, and accurate; possessed of a remarkable vivacity of parts, with a surprising solidity of understanding; was a wit

without arrogance, a patriot without prejudice, and a courtier without dependance.

While the militia bill remained under consideration in the House, a petition for a constitutional and well-regulated militia was presented by the mayor, jurats, and commonalty of the king's town and parish of Maidstone, in Kent, in common-council assembled. At the same time remonstrances were offered by the protestant dissenting ministers of the three denominations in and about the cities of London and Westminster; by the protestant dissenters of Shrewsbury; the dissenting ministers of Devonshire; the protestant dissenters, being freeholders and burgesses of the town and county, of the town of Nottingham, joined with other inhabitants of the church of England, expressing their apprehension, that, in the bill then depending, it might be proposed to enact, that the said militia should be exercised on the Lord's day, commonly called Sunday, and praying that no clause for such purpose might pass into a law. Though nothing could be more ridiculously fanatic and impertinent than a declaration of such a scruple against a practice so laudable and necessary, in a country where that day of the week is generally spent in merry-making, riot, and debauchery, the House paid so much regard to the squeamish consciences of those puritanical petitioners, that Monday was pitched upon for the day of exercise to the militia, though on such working-days they might be much more profitably employed, both for themselves and their country; and that no religious pretence should be left for opposing the progress and execution of the bill, proper clauses were inserted for the relief of the quakers. Another petition and counter-petition were delivered by the magistrates, freeholders, and burgesses of the town of Nottingham, in relation to their particular franchise, which were accordingly considered in framing the bill.

After mature deliberation, and divers alterations, it passed the Lower House, and was sent to the Lords for their concurrence: here it underwent several amendments, one of which was the reduction of the number of militia-men to one half of what the Commons had promised; namely, to thirty-two thousand three hundred and forty men for the whole kingdom of England and Wales. The amendments being canvassed in the Lower House, met with some opposition, and divers conferences with their lordships ensued: at length, however, the two Houses agreed to every article, and the bill soon received the royal sanction. No provision, however, was made for clothes, arms, accoutrements, and pay: had regulations been made for these purposes, the act would have become a money-bill, in which the Lords could have made no amendment: in order, therefore, to prevent any difference between the two Houses, on a dispute of privileges not yet determined, and that the House of Peers might make what amendments they should think expedient, the Commons left the expense of the militia to be regulated in a subsequent bill, during the following session, when they could, with more certainty, compute what sum would be necessary for these purposes. After all, the bill seemed to be crude, imperfect, and ineffectual, and the promoters of it were well aware of its defects; but they were apprehensive that it would have been dropped altogether, had they insisted upon the scheme being executed in its full extent. They were eager to seize this opportunity of trying an experiment, which might afterwards be improved to a greater national advantage; and therefore they acquiesced in many restrictions and alterations, which otherwise would not have been adopted.

BILL FOR QUARTERING THE FOREIGN TROOPS, &c.

The next measure that fell under the consideration of the House was rendered necessary by the inhospitable perseverance of the publicans and innholders, who conceived themselves not obliged by law to receive or give quarters in their houses to any foreign troops, and accordingly refused admittance to the Hessian auxiliaries, who began to be dreadfully incommoded by the severity of the weather. This objection, implying an attack upon the prerogative, the government did not think fit, at this juncture, to dispute any other way, than by procuring a new law in favour of those foreigners. It was entitled, "A bill to make provision for quartering the foreign troops now in this kingdom;" prepared by Lord Barrington, the chancellor of the exchequer, and the solicitor-general, and immediately passed without opposition. This step being taken, another bill was brought in, for the regulation of the marine forces while on shore. This was almost a transcript of the mutiny act, with this material difference: it empowered the Admiralty to grant commissions for holding general courts-martial, and to do every thing, and in the same manner as his majesty is empowered to do by the usual mutiny-bill; consequently, every clause was adopted without question.

BILL FOR THE MORE SPEEDY RECRUITING THE LAND FORCES AND MARINES, &c.

The same favourable reception was given to a bill for the more speedy and effectual recruiting his majesty's land forces and marines; a law which threw into the hands of many worthless magistrates an additional power of oppressing their fellow-creatures: all justices

of the peace, commissioners for the land-tax, magistrates of corporations and boroughs, were empowered to meet by direction of the secretary at war, communicated in precepts issued by the high sheriffs, or their deputies, within their respective divisions, and at their usual places of meeting, to qualify themselves for the execution of the act: then they were required to appoint the times and places for their succeeding meetings; to issue precepts to the proper officers for these succeeding meetings; and to give notice of the time and place of every meeting to such military officers, as, by notice from the secretary at war, should be directed to attend that service. The annual bill for preventing mutiny and desertion met with no objections, and indeed contained nothing essentially different from that which had passed in the last session. The next law enacted was, for further preventing embezzlement of goods and apparel, by those with whom they are intrusted, and putting a stop to the practice of gaming in public-houses. By this bill a penalty was inflicted on pawnbrokers, in a summary way, for receiving goods, knowing them not to be the property of the pledger, and pawned without the authority of the owner[1]. With respect to gaming, the act ordained, that all publicans suffering journeymen, labourers, servants, or apprentices, to game with cards, dice, shuffle-boards, mississippi, or billiard-tables, skittles, nine-pins, &c., should forfeit forty shillings for the first offence, and for every subsequent offence ten pounds shall be levied by distress.

Divers inconveniences having resulted from the interposition of justices, who, in pursuance of an act of Parliament passed in the present reign, assumed the right of establishing rates for the payment of wages to weavers, several petitions were offered to the House of Commons, representing the evil consequences of such

[1] See note [O], vol. vi.

an establishment; and although these arguments were answered and opposed in counter-petitions, the Commons, actuated by a laudable concern for the interest of the woollen manufacture, after due deliberation removed the grievance by a new bill, repealing so much of the former act as empowered justices of the peace to make rates for the payment of wages[m]. The Commons were not more forward to provide supplies for prosecuting the war with vigour, than ready to adopt regulations for the advantage of trade and manufactures. The society of the free British fishery presented a petition, alleging, that they had employed the sum of one hundred thirty thousand three hundred and five pounds, eight shillings, and sixpence, together with the entire produce of their fish, and all the monies arising from the several branches allowed on the tonnage of their shipping, and on the exportation of their fish, in carrying on the said fishery; and that, from their being obliged, in the infancy of the undertaking, to incur a much larger expense than was at that time foreseen, they now found themselves so far reduced in their capital as to be utterly incapable of further prosecuting the fisheries with any hope of success, unless indulged with the further assistance of Parliament. They prayed, therefore, that towards enabling them to carry on the said fisheries, they might have liberty to make use of such nets as they should find best adapted to the said fisheries; each buss, nevertheless, carrying to sea the same quantity and depth of netting, which, by the fishery-acts, they were then bound to carry; that the bounty of thirty shillings per ton, allowed by the said acts on the vessels employed in the fishery, might be increased; and forasmuch as many of the stock-proprietors were unable to advance any further sum for prosecuting this branch of commerce; and others un-

[m] See note [P], vol. vi.

willing in the present situation, and under the present restraints, to risk any further sum in the undertaking; that the stock of the society, by the said acts made unalienable, except in case of death or bankruptcy, for a term of years, might forthwith be made transferable; and that the petitioners might be at liberty, between the intervals of the fishing seasons, to employ the busses in such a manner as they should find for the advantage of the society. While the committee was employed in deliberating on the particulars of this remonstrance, another was delivered from the free British fishery chamber of Whitehaven in Cumberland, representing, that as the law then stood, they went to Shetland, and returned at a great expense and loss of time; and while the war continued durst not stay there to fish, besides being obliged to run the most imminent risks, by going and returning without convoy: that ever since the institution of the present fishery, experience had fully shown the fishery of Shetland not worth following, as thereby the petitioners had lost two months of a much better fishery in St. George's channel, within one day's sail of Whitehaven: they took notice, that the free British fishery society had applied to the House for further assistance and relief; and prayed that Campbeltown, in Argyleshire, might be appointed the place of rendezvous for the busses belonging to Whitehaven, for the summer as well as the winter fishery, that they might be enabled to fish with greater advantage. The committee, having considered the matter of both petitions, were of opinion that the petitioners should be at liberty to use such nets as they should find best adapted to the white herring fishery: that the bounty of thirty shillings per ton should be augmented to fifty: that the petitioners should be allowed, during the intervals of the fishing seasons, to employ their vessels in any other lawful business, provided they should have been employed in the herring fishery during the proper

seasons: that they might use such barrels for packing the fish as they then used, or might hereafter find best adapted for that purpose: that they should have liberty to make use of any waste or uncultivated land, one hundred yards at the least above high-water mark, for the purpose of drying their nets; and that Campbeltown would be the most proper and convenient place for the rendezvous of the busses belonging to Whitehaven. This last resolution, however, was not inserted in the bill which contained the other five, and in a little time received the royal assent.

ACT FOR IMPORTING AMERICAN IRON DUTY FREE.

Such are the connexions, dependencies, and relations subsisting between the mechanical arts, agriculture, and manufactures of Great Britain, that it requires study, deliberation, and inquiry in the legislature to discern and distinguish the whole scope and consequences of many projects offered for the benefit of the commonwealth. The society of merchant adventurers in the city of Bristol alleged, in a petition to the House of Commons, that great quantities of bar-iron were imported into Great Britain from Sweden, Russia, and other parts, chiefly purchased with ready money, some of which iron was exported again to Africa and other places, and the rest wrought up by the manufacturers. They affirmed that bar-iron, imported from North America, would answer the same purposes; and the importation of it tend not only to the great advantage of the kingdom, by increasing its shipping and navigation, but also to the benefit of the British colonies: that by an act passed in the twenty-third year of his present majesty's reign, the importation of bar-iron from America into the port of London, duty free, was permitted; but its being carried coastways, or farther by land than

ten miles, had been prohibited; so that several very considerable manufacturing towns were deprived of the use of American iron, and the outports prevented from employing it in their export commerce: they requested, therefore, that bar-iron might be imported from North America into Great Britain, duty free, by all his majesty's subjects. This request being reinforced by many other petitions from different parts of the kingdom, other classes of men, who thought their several interests would be affected by such a measure, took the alarm; and, in divers counter-petitions, specified many ill consequences which they alleged would arise from its being enacted into a law. Pamphlets were published on both sides of the question, and violent disputes were kindled upon the subject, which was justly deemed a matter of national importance. The opposers of the bill observed, that large quantities of iron were yearly produced at home, and employed multitudes of poor people, there being no less than one hundred and nine forges in England and Wales, besides those erected in Scotland, the whole producing eighteen thousand tons of iron: that as the mines in Great Britain are inexhaustible, the produce would of late years have been considerably increased, had not the people been kept under continual apprehension of seeing American iron admitted duty free; a supposition which had prevented the traders from extending their works, and discouraged many from engaging in this branch of traffic: they alleged that the iron-works, already carried on in England, occasioned a consumption of one hundred and ninety-eight thousand cords of wood, produced in coppices that grow upon barren lands, which could not otherwise be turned to any good account; that as the coppices afford shade, and preserve a moisture in the ground, the pasture is more valuable with the wood, than it would be if the coppices were grubbed up; consequently all the estates, where these now grow, would sink in their

yearly value: that these coppices, now cultivated and preserved for the use of the iron-works, are likewise absolutely necessary for the manufacture of leather, as they furnish bark for the tanners; and that, according to the management of these coppices, they produced a great number of timber trees, so necessary for the purposes of building. They asserted, that, neither the American iron, nor any that had yet been found in Great Britain, was so proper for converting into steel as that which comes from Sweden, particularly that sort called ore ground; but as there are mines in the northern parts of Britain, nearly in the same latitude with those of Sweden, furnished with sufficient quantities of wood, and rivers for mills and engines, it was hardly to be doubted but that people would find metal of the same quality, and, in a few years, be able to prevent the necessity of importing iron either from Sweden or Russia. They inferred that American iron could never interfere with that which Great Britain imported from Sweden, because it was not fit for edged tools, anchors, chain-plates, and other particulars necessary in ship-building; nor diminish the importation of Russian iron, which was not only harder than the American and British, but also could be afforded cheaper than that brought from our own plantations, even though the duty of this last should be removed. The importation of American iron, therefore, duty free, could interfere with no other sort but that produced in Britain, with which, by means of this advantage, it would clash so much, as to put a stop in a little time to all the iron-works now carried on in the kingdom, and reduce to beggary a great number of families whom they support. To these objections the favourers of the bill solicited replied, that when a manufacture is much more valuable than the rough materials, and these cannot be produced at home in sufficient quantities, and at such a price as is consistent with the pre-

servation of the manufacture, it is the interest of the legislature to admit a free importation of these materials, even from foreign countries, although it should put an end to the production of that material in this island: that as the neighbours of Great Britain are now more attentive than ever to their commercial interest, and endeavouring to manufacture their rough materials at home, this nation must take every method for lowering the price of materials, otherwise in a few years it will lose the manufacture; and, instead of supplying other countries, be furnished by them with all the fine toys and utensils made of steel and iron: that being in danger of losing not only the manufacture but the produce of iron, unless it can be procured at a cheaper rate than that for which it is sold at present, the only way of attaining this end is by diminishing the duty payable upon the importation of foreign iron, or by rendering it necessary for the undertakers of the iron mines in Great Britain to sell their produce cheaper than it has been for some years afforded: that the most effectual method for this purpose is to raise up a rival, by permitting a free importation of all sorts of iron from the American plantations: that American iron can never be sold so cheap as that of Britain can be afforded; for, in the colonies, labour of all kinds is much dearer than in England: if a man employs his own slaves, he must reckon in his charge a great deal more than the common interest of their purchase money, because, when one of them dies, or escapes from his master, he loses both interest and principal: that the common interest of money in the plantations is considerably higher than in England, consequently no man in that country will employ his money in any branch of trade by which he cannot gain considerably more per cent. than is expected in Great Britain, where the interest is low, and profit moderate; a circumstance which will always give a great advantage to the British

miner, who likewise enjoys an exemption from freight and insurance, which lie heavy upon the American adventurer, especially in time of war. With respect to the apprehension of the leather tanners, they observed, that as the coppices generally grew on barren lands, not fit for tillage, and improved the pasturage, no proprietor would be at the expense of grubbing up the wood to spoil the pasture, as he could make no other use of the land on which it was produced. The wood must be always worth something, especially in counties where there is not plenty of coal, and the timber trees would produce considerable advantage: therefore, if there was not one iron mine in Great Britain, no coppices would be grubbed up, unless it grew on a rich soil, which would produce corn instead of cord wood; consequently, the tanners have nothing to fear, especially as planting hath become a prevailing taste among the landholders of the island. The committee appointed to prepare the bill seriously weighed and canvassed these arguments, examined disputed facts, and inspected papers and accounts relating to the produce, importation, and manufactory of iron. At length Mr. John Pitt reported to the House their opinion, implying that the liberty granted by an act passed in the twenty-third year of his majesty's reign, of importing bar iron from the British colonies in America into the port of London, should be extended to all the other ports of Great Britain; and that so much of that act as related to this clause should be repealed. The House having agreed to these resolutions, and the bill being brought in accordingly, another petition was presented by several noblemen, gentlemen, freeholders, and other proprietors, owners, and possessors of coppices and woodlands, in the west riding of Yorkshire, alleging, that a permission to import American bar-iron, duty free, would be attended with numberless ill consequences both of a public and private nature; specifying certain hardships to

which they in particular would be exposed; and praying that, if the bill should pass, they might be relieved from the pressure of an act passed in the reign of Henry VIII., obliging the owners of coppice-woods to preserve them, under severe penalties; and be permitted to fell and grub up their coppice-woods, in order to a more proper cultivation of the soil, without being restrained by the fear of malicious and interested prosecutions. In consequence of this remonstrance, a clause was added to the bill, repealing so much of the act of Henry VIII. as prohibited the conversion of coppice or underwoods into pasture or tillage; then it passed through both Houses, and received the royal sanction. As there was not time, after this affair came upon the carpet, to obtain any new accounts from America, and as it was thought necessary to know the quantities of iron made in that country, the House presented an address to his majesty, desiring he would be pleased to give directions that there should be laid before them, in the next session of Parliament, an account of the quantity of iron made in the American colonies, from Christmas, in the year one thousand seven hundred and forty-nine, to the fifth day of January, in the year one thousand seven hundred and fifty-six, each year being distinguished.

REGULATIONS WITH RESPECT TO THE IMPORTATION OF SILK.

From this important object, the Parliament converted its attention to a regulation of a much more private nature. In consequence of a petition by the lord mayor, aldermen, and commons of the city of London, a bill was brought in, and passed into a law without opposition, for the more effectual preservation and improvement of the fry and spawn of fish in the river Thames, and waters of Medway, and for the better regulating the fishery in those rivers. The two

next measures taken for the benefit of the public were, first a bill to render more effectual the several laws then in being, for the amendment and preservation of the highways and turnpike roads of the kingdom; the other for the more effectually preventing the spreading of the contagious distemper which, at that time, raged among the horned cattle. A third arose from the distress of poor silk manufacturers, who were destitute of employment, and deprived of all means of subsisting through the interruption of the Levant trade, occasioned by war, and the delay of the merchant ships from Italy. In order to remedy this inconvenience, a bill was prepared, enacting, that any persons might import from any place, in any ship or vessel whatsoever, till the first day of December, one thousand seven hundred and fifty-seven, organzine thrown silk of the growth or production of Italy, to be brought to the custom-house of London, wheresoever landed; but that no Italian thrown silk, coarser than Bologna, nor any tram of the growth of Italy, nor any other thrown silk of the growth or production of Turkey, Persia, East India, or China, should be imported by this act, under the penalty of the forfeiture thereof. Notwithstanding several petitions, presented by the merchants, owners, and commanders of ships, and others trading to Leghorn, and other ports of Italy, as well as by the importers and manufacturers of raw silks, representing the evil consequences that would probably attend the passing of such a bill, the Parliament agreed to this temporary deviation from the famous act of navigation, for a present supply to the poor manufacturers.

The next civil regulation established in this session of Parliament was in itself judicious, and, had it been more earnestly suggested, might have been much more beneficial to the public. In order to discourage the practice of smuggling, and prevent the desperadoes concerned therein from inlisting in the service of the

enemy, a law was passed, enacting, that every person who had been, before the first of May in the present year, guilty of illegally running, concealing, receiving, or carrying any wool, or prohibited goods, or any foreign commodities liable to duties, the same not having been paid or secured; or of aiding therein, or had been found with fire-arms or weapons, in order to be aiding to such offenders; or had been guilty of receiving such goods after seizure; or of any act whatsoever, whereby persons might be deemed runners of foreign goods; or of hindering, wounding, or beating any officer in the execution of his duty, or assisting therein, should be indemnified from all such offences, concerning which no suit should then have been commenced, or composition made, on condition that he should, before being apprehended or prosecuted, and before the first day of December, enter himself with some commissioned officer of his majesty's fleet, to serve as a common sailor; and should, for three years from such entry, unless sooner fully discharged, actually serve and do duty in that station, and register his name, &c. with the clerk of the peace of the county where he resided, as the act prescribes. An attempt was made in favour of the seamen employed in the navy, who had been very irregularly paid, and subject to grievous hardships in consequence of this irregularity: Mr. Grenville, brother to Earl Temple, moved for leave to bring in a bill for the encouragement of seamen employed in his majesty's navy, and for establishing a regular method for the punctual, speedy, and certain payment of their wages, as well as for rescuing them from the arts of fraud and imposition. The proposal was corroborated by divers petitions; the bill was prepared, read, printed, and, after it had undergone some amendment, passed into the House of Lords, where it was encountered with several objections, and dropped for this session of Parliament.

INQUIRY INTO THE SCARCITY OF CORN.

The House of Commons being desirous of preventing, for the future, such distresses as the poor had lately undergone, appointed a committee to consider of proper provisions to restrain the price of corn and bread within due bounds for the future. For this purpose they were empowered to send for persons, papers, and records; and it was resolved, that all who attended the committee should have voices. Having inquired into the causes of the late scarcity, they agreed to several resolutions, and a bill was brought in to explain and amend the laws against regraters, forestallers, and engrossers of corn. The committee also received instructions to inquire into the abuses of millers, mealmen, and bakers, with regard to bread, and to consider of proper methods to prevent them in the sequel; but no further progress was made in this important affair, which was the more interesting, as the lives of individuals, in a great measure, depended upon a speedy reformation; for the millers and bakers were said to have adulterated their flour with common whiting, lime, bone-ashes, alum, and other ingredients pernicious to the human constitution; a consummation of villany for which no adequate punishment could be inflicted. Among the measures proposed in Parliament which did not succeed, one of the most remarkable was a bill prepared by Mr. Rose Fuller, Mr. Charles Townshend, and Mr. Banks, to explain, amend, and render more effectual a law passed in the reign of King William the Third, entitled "An Act to punish Governors of Plantations, in this Kingdom, for Crimes committed by them in the Plantations." This bill was proposed in consequence of some complaints, specifying acts of cruelty, folly, and oppression, by which some British governors had been

lately distinguished; but, before the bill could be brought in, the Parliament was prorogued.

INVESTIGATION OF THE LOSS OF MINORCA.

But no step taken by the House of Commons, in the course of this session, was more interesting to the body of the people than the inquiry into the loss of Minorca, which had excited such loud and universal clamour. By addresses to the king, unanimously voted, the Commons requested that his majesty would give directions for laying before them copies of all the letters and papers containing any intelligence received by the secretaries of state, the commissioners of the Admiralty, or any others of his majesty's ministers, in relation to the equipment of the French fleet at Toulon, or the designs of the French on Minorca, or any other of his majesty's possessions in Europe, since the first day of January, in the year one thousand seven hundred and fifty-five, to the first day of August, one thousand seven hundred and fifty-six. They likewise desired to peruse a list of the ships of war that were equipped and made ready for sea, from the first of August, in the year one thousand seven hundred and fifty-five, to the thirtieth day of April, in the following year; with the copies of all sailing orders sent to the commanders during that period; as also the state and condition of his majesty's ships in the several ports of Great Britain at the time of Admiral Byng's departure, with the squadron under his command, for the relief of fort St. Philip, during the period of time above-mentioned, according to the monthly returns made by the Admiralty, with the number of seamen mustered and borne on board the respective ships. They demanded copies of all orders and instructions given to that admiral, and of letters written to and received from him, during his continuance in that command, either by the secretaries of state, or lords

of the Admiralty, relating to the condition of his squadron, and to the execution of his orders. In a word, they required the inspection of all papers, which could in any manner tend to explain the loss of Minorca, and the miscarriage of Mr. Byng's squadron. His majesty complied with every article of their requests: the papers were presented to the House, ordered to lie upon the table for the perusal of the members, and finally referred to the consideration of a committee of the whole House. In the course of their deliberations they addressed his majesty for more information, till at length the truth seemed to be smothered under such an enormous burden of papers, as the efforts of a whole session could not have properly removed. Indeed, many discerning persons without doors began to despair of seeing the mystery unfolded, as soon as the inquiry was undertaken by a committee of the whole House. They observed, that an affair of such a dark, intricate, and suspicious nature, ought to have been referred to a select and secret committee, chosen by ballot, empowered to send for persons, papers, and records, and to examine witnesses in the most solemn and deliberate manner; that the names of the committee ought to have been published for the satisfaction of the people, who could have judged, with some certainty, whether the inquiry would be carried on with such impartiality as the national misfortune required. They suspected that this reference to a committee of the whole House was a mal-contrivance, to prevent a regular and minute investigation, to introduce confusion and contest, to puzzle, perplex, and obumbrate; to tease, fatigue, and disgust the inquirers, that the examination might be hurried over in a superficial and perfunctory manner; and the ministry, from this anarchy and confusion of materials, half explored and undigested, derive a general parliamentary approbation, to which they might appeal from the accusations of the people. A select committee would have probably exa-

mined some of the clerks of the respective offices, that they might certainly know whether any letters or papers had been suppressed, whether the extracts had been faithfully made, and whether there might not be papers of intelligence, which, though proper to be submitted to a select and secret committee, could not, consistently with the honour of the nation, be communicated to a committee of the whole House. Indeed, it does not appear that the ministers had any foreign intelligence or correspondence that could be much depended upon in any matter of national importance, and no evidence was examined on the occasion; a circumstance the less to be regretted, as, in times past, evil ministers have generally found means to render such inquiries ineffectual; and the same arts would at any rate have operated with the same efficacy, had a secret committee been employed at this juncture. Be that as it may, several resolutions were reported from the committee, though some of them were not carried by the majority without violent dispute and severe altercation. The first and last of their resolutions require particular notice. By the former, it appeared to the committee, that his majesty, from the twenty-seventh day of August, in the year one thousand seven hundred and fifty-five, to the twentieth day of April in the succeeding year, received such repeated and concurrent intelligence, as gave just reason to believe that the French king intended to invade his dominions of Great Britain or Ireland. In the latter they declare their opinion, that no greater number of ships of war could be sent into the Mediterranean than were actually sent thither under the command of Admiral Byng; nor any greater reinforcement than the regiment which was sent, and the detachment, equal to a battalion, which was ordered to the relief of fort St. Philip, consistently with the state of the navy, and the various services essential to the safety of his majesty's dominions, and the interests

of his subjects. It must have been something more powerful than ordinary conviction that suggested these opinions. Whatever reports might have been circulated by the French ministry, in order to amuse, intimidate, and detach the attention of the English government from America and the Mediterranean, where they really intended to exert themselves, yet the circumstances of the two nations being considered, one would think there could have been no just grounds to fear an invasion of Great Britain or Ireland, especially when other intelligence seemed to point out much more probable scenes of action. But the last resolution is still more incomprehensible to those who know not exactly the basis on which it was raised. The number of ships of war in actual commission amounted to two hundred and fifty, having on board fifty thousand seamen and marines. Intelligence and repeated information of the French design upon Minorca had been conveyed to the ministry of England, about six months before it was put in execution. Is it credible, that in all this time the nation could not equip or spare above eleven ships of the line and six frigates, to save the important island of Minorca? Is it easy to conceive, that from a standing army of fifty thousand men, one regiment of troops could not have been detached to reinforce a garrison, well known to be insufficient for the works it was destined to defend? To persons of common intellects it appeared, that intelligence of the armament of Toulon was conveyed to the Admiralty as early as the month of September, in the year one thousand seven hundred and fifty-five, with express notice that it would consist of twelve ships of the line; that the design against Minorca was communicated as early as the twenty-seventh day of August, by Consul Banks, of Carthagena; confirmed by letters from Consul Bertes, at Genoa, dated on the seventeenth and twenty-sixth of January, and received by Mr. Fox, secretary of state, on the fourth and

eleventh of February, as well as by many subsequent intimations; that, notwithstanding these repeated advices, even after hostilities had commenced in Europe, when the garrison of Minorca amounted to no more than four incomplete regiments, and one company of artillery, forty-two officers being absent, and the place otherwise unprovided for a siege, when the Mediterranean squadron, commanded by Mr. Edgecumbe, consisted of two ships of the line, and five frigates; neither stores, ammunition, nor provision, the absent officers belonging to the garrison, recruits for the regiments, though ready raised, miners, nor any additional troops were sent to the island, nor the squadron augmented, till Admiral Byng sailed from Spithead on the sixth day of April, with no more ships of the line than, by the most early and authentic intelligence, the government were informed would sail from Toulon, even when Mr. Byng should have been joined by Commodore Edgecumbe; a junction upon which no dependance ought to have been laid; that this squadron contained no troops but such as belonged to the four regiments in garrison, except one battalion to serve in the fleet as marines, unless we include the order for another to be embarked at Gibraltar; which order was neither obeyed nor understood; that, considering the danger to which Minorca was exposed, and the forwardness of the enemy's preparations at Toulon, Admiral Osborne, with thirteen ships of the line and one frigate, who returned on the sixteenth of February, after having convoyed a fleet of merchant-ships, might have been detached to Minorca, without hazarding the coast of Great Britain; for at that time, exclusive of this squadron, there were eight ships of the line and thirty-two frigates ready manned, and thirty-two ships of the line and five frigates almost equipped; that Admiral Hawke was sent with fourteen ships of the line and one frigate to cruise

in the bay of Biscay, after repeated intelligence had been received that the French fleet had sailed for the West Indies, and the eleven ships remaining at Brest and Rochefort were in want of hands and cannon, so that they could never serve to cover any embarkation or descent; consequently, Mr. Hawke's squadron might have been spared for the relief of Minorca; that instead of attending to this important object, the Admiralty, on the eighth day of March, sent two ships of the line and three frigates to intercept a coasting convoy off Cape Barfleur; on the eleventh of the same month they detached two ships of the line to the West Indies, and on the nineteenth two more to North America, where they could be of little immediate service; on the twenty-third two of the line and three frigates a convoy-hunting off Cherbourg; and on the first of April five ships of the line, including three returned from this last service, to reinforce Sir Edward Hawke, already too strong for the French fleet bound to Canada; that all these ships might have been added to Mr. Byng's squadron, without exposing Great Britain or Ireland to any hazard of invasion; that at length Mr. Byng was detached with ten great ships only, and even denied a frigate to repeat signals, for which he petitioned; although at that very time there was in port, exclusive of his squadron, seventeen ships of the line and thirteen frigates ready for sea, besides eleven of the line and nineteen frigates almost equipped. From these and other circumstances, particularized and urged with great vivacity, many individuals inferred, that a greater number of ships might have been detached to the Mediterranean than were actually sent with Admiral Byng; that the not sending an earlier and stronger force was one great cause of Minorca's being lost, and co-operated with the delay of the ministry in sending thither reinforcements of troops, their neglect in suffering the officers of the

garrison to continue absent from their duty, and their omitting to give orders for raising miners to serve in the fortress of Mahon.

EXAMINATION OF THE AMERICAN CONTRACT.

The next inquiry in which the House of Commons engaged related to the contracts for victualling the forces in America, which were supposed by some patriots to be fraudulent and unconscionable. This suspicion arose from an ambiguous expression, on which the contractor being interrogated by the committee appointed to examine the particulars, he prudently interpreted it in such a manner as to screen himself from the resentment of the legislature. The House, therefore, resolved that the contract entered into on the twenty-sixth day of March, in the year one thousand seven hundred and fifty-six, by the commissioners of the treasury, with William Baker, Christopher Kilby, and Richard Baker of London, merchants, for furnishing provisions to the forces under the command of the Earl of Loudoun, was prudent and necessary, and properly adapted to the securing a constant and effectual supply for those forces in America.

INQUIRY INTO THE CONDUCT OF ADMIRAL KNOWLES, &c.

The preceding session an address had been presented to the king by the House of Commons, desiring his majesty would give orders for laying before them several papers relating to disputes which had lately happened between his excellency, Charles Knowles, Esq. and some of the principal inhabitants of the island of Jamaica. This governor was accused of many illegal, cruel, and arbitrary acts, during the course of his administration; but these imputations he incurred by

an exertion of power, which was in itself laudable, and well intended for the commercial interest of the island. This was his changing the seat of government, and procuring an act of assembly for removing the several laws, records, books, papers, and writings belonging to several offices in that island, from Spanish-town to Kingston; and for obliging the several officers to keep their offices, and hold a supreme court of judicature at this last place, to which he had moved the seat of government. Spanish-town, otherwise called St. Jago de la Vega, the old capital, was an inconsiderable inland place, of no security, trade, or importance; whereas Kingston was the centre of commerce, situated on the side of a fine harbour filled with ships, well secured from the insults of an enemy, large, wealthy, and flourishing. Here the merchants dwell, and ship the greatest part of the sugars that grow upon the island. They found it extremely inconvenient and expensive to take out their clearances at Spanish-town, which stands at a considerable distance; and the same inconvenience and expense being felt by the rest of the inhabitants, who had occasion to prosecute suits at law, or attend the assembly of the island, they joined in representations to the governor, requesting, that, in consideration of these inconveniences, added to that of the weakness of Spanish-town and the importance of Kingston, the seat of government might be removed. He complied with their request, and in so doing entailed upon himself the hatred and resentment of certain powerful planters, who possessed estates in and about the old town of St. Jago de la Vega, thus deserted. This seems to have been the real source of the animosity and clamour incurred by Mr. Knowles, against whom a petition, signed by nineteen members of the assembly, had been sent to England, and presented to his majesty. In the two sessions preceding this year the affair had been brought into the House of Commons, where this go-

vernor's character was painted in frightful colours, and divers papers relating to the dispute were examined. Mr. Knowles having by this time returned to England, the subject of his administration was revived, and referred to a committee of the whole House. In the mean time, petitions were presented by several merchants of London and Liverpool, concerned in the trade to Jamaica, alleging, that the removal of the public courts, offices, and records of the island of Jamaica to Kingston, and fixing the seat of government there, had been productive of many important advantages, by rendering the strength of the island more formidable, the property of the traders and inhabitants more secure, and the prosecution of all commercial business more expeditious and less expensive than formerly; therefore, praying that the purposes of the act passed in Jamaica for that end might be carried into effectual execution, in such manner as the House should think proper. The committee having examined a great number of papers, agreed to some resolutions, importing, that a certain resolution of the assembly of Jamaica, dated on the twenty-ninth day of October, in the year one thousand seven hundred and fifty-three, implying a claim of right in that assembly to raise and apply public money without the consent of the governor and council, was illegal, repugnant to the terms of his majesty's commission to his governor of the said island, and derogatory of the rights of the crown and people of Great Britain; that the last six resolutions taken in the assembly of Jamaica, on the twenty-ninth day of October, in the year one thousand seven hundred and fifty-three, proceeded on a manifest misapprehension of the king's instruction to his governor, requiring him not to give his assent to any bill of an unusual or extraordinary nature and importance, wherein his majesty's prerogative, or the property of his subjects, might be prejudiced, or the trade or shipping of the kingdom any ways affected, unless there should be

a clause inserted, suspending the execution of such bill until his majesty's pleasure should be known; that such instruction was just and necessary, and no alteration of the constitution of the island, nor any way derogatory to the rights of the subjects in Jamaica. From these resolutions the reader may perceive the nature of the dispute which had arisen between the people of Jamaica and their governor, Vice-Admiral Knowles, whose conduct on this occasion seems to have been justified by the legislature. The Parliament, however, forbore to determine the question, whether the removal of the courts of judicature from Spanish-town to Kingston was a measure calculated for the interest of the island in general.

RESOLUTIONS CONCERNING MILFORD-HAVEN.

The last subject which we shall mention as having fallen under the cognizance of the Commons during this session of Parliament was the state of Milford-haven on the coast of Wales, one of the most capacious, safe, and commodious harbours in Great Britain. Here the country affords many conveniences for building ships of war, and erecting forts, docks, quays, and magazines. It might be fortified at a very small expense, so as to be quite secure from any attempts of the enemy, and rendered by far the most useful harbour in the kingdom for fleets, cruisers, trading ships, and packet-boats, bound to and from the westward; for, from hence they may put to sea almost with any wind, and even at low water: they may weather Scilly and Cape Clear when no vessel can stir from the British channel, or out of the French ports of Brest and Rochefort; and as a post can travel from hence in three days to London, it might become the centre of very useful sea intelligence. A petition from several merchants in London was presented, and recommended to the House in a message

from the king, specifying the advantages of this harbour, and the small expense at which it might be fortified, and praying that the House would take this important subject into consideration. Accordingly, a committee was appointed for this purpose, with power to send for persons, papers, and records; and every circumstance relating to it was examined with accuracy and deliberation. At length the report being made to the House by Mr. Charles Townshend, they unanimously agreed to an address, representing to his majesty, that many great losses had been sustained by the trade of the kingdom, in time of war, from the want of a safe harbour on the western coast of the island, for the reception and protection of merchant ships, and sending out cruisers; that the harbour of Milford-haven, in the county of Pembroke, is most advantageously situated, and if properly defended and secured, in every respect adapted to the answering those important purposes; they, therefore, humbly besought his majesty, that he would give immediate directions for erecting batteries, with proper cover, on the sides of the said harbour, in the most convenient places for guarding the entrance called Hubberstone-road, and also such other fortifications as might be necessary to secure the interior parts of the harbour; and that, until such batteries and fortifications could be completed, some temporary defence might be provided for the immediate protection of the ships and vessels lying in the said harbour; finally, they assured him the House would make good to his majesty all such expenses as should be incurred for these purposes. The address met with a gracious reception, and a promise that such directions should be given. The harbour was actually surveyed, the places were pitched upon for batteries, and the estimates prepared, but no further progress has since been made.

SESSION CLOSED.

We have now finished the detail of all the material transactions of this session, except what relates to the fate of Admiral Byng, which now claims our attention. In the mean time we may observe, that on the fourth day of July the session was closed with his majesty's harangue, the most remarkable and pleasing paragraph of which turned upon his royal assurance, that the succour and preservation of his dominions in America had been his constant care, and, next to the security of his kingdoms, should continue to be his great and principal object. He told them he had taken such measures as, he trusted, by the blessing of God, might effectually disappoint the designs of the enemy in those parts; that he had no further view but to vindicate the just rights of his crown and subjects from the most injurious encroachments; to preserve tranquillity, as far as the circumstances of things might admit; to prevent the true friends of Britain, and the liberties of Europe, from being oppressed and endangered by any unprovoked and unnatural conjunction.

TRIAL OF ADMIRAL BYNG.

Of all the transactions that distinguished this year, the most extraordinary was the sentence executed on Admiral Byng, the son of that great officer who had acquired such honour by his naval exploits in the preceding reign, and was ennobled for his services by the title of Lord Viscount Torrington. His second son, John Byng, had from his earliest youth been trained to his father's profession; and was generally esteemed one of the best officers in the navy, when he embarked in that expedition to Minorca, which covered his character with disgrace, and even exposed him to all the

horrors of an ignominious death. On the twenty-eighth day of December his trial began before a court-martial, held on board the ship St. George, in the harbour of Portsmouth, to which place Mr. Byng had been conveyed from Greenwich by a party of horse-guards, and insulted by the populace in every town and village through which he passed. The court having proceeded to examine the evidences for the crown and the prisoner, from day to day, in the course of a long sitting, agreed unanimously to thirty-seven resolutions, implying their opinion, that Admiral Byng, during the engagement between the British and French fleets, on the twentieth day of May last, did not do his utmost endeavour to take, seize, and destroy the ships of the French king, which it was his duty to have engaged, and to assist such of his majesty's ships as were engaged, which it was his duty to have assisted; and that he did not exert his utmost power for the relief of St. Philip's castle. They, therefore, unanimously agreed that he fell under part of the twelfth article of an act of Parliament passed in the twenty-second year of the present reign, for amending, explaining, and reducing into one act of Parliament, the laws relating to the government of his majesty's ships, vessels, and forces by sea; and as that article positively prescribed death, without any alternative left to the discretion of the court under any variation of circumstances, they unanimously adjudged the said Admiral John Byng to be shot to death, at such time, and on board of such ship, as the lords commissioners of the Admiralty should please to direct. But as it appeared, by the evidence of the officers who were near the admiral's person, that no backwardness was perceivable in him during the action, nor any mark of fear or confusion either in his countenance or behaviour; but that he delivered his orders coolly and distinctly, without seeming de-

ficient in personal courage; and, from other circumstances, they believed his misconduct did not arise either from cowardice or disaffection, they unanimously and earnestly recommended him as a proper object of mercy. The admiral himself behaved through the whole trial with the most cheerful composure, seemingly the effect of conscious innocence, upon which, perhaps, he too much relied. Even after he had heard the evidence examined against him, and finished his own defence, he laid his account in being honourably acquitted; and ordered his coach to be ready for conveying him directly from the tribunal to London. A gentleman, his friend, by whom he was attended, having received intimation of the sentence to be pronounced, thought it his duty to prepare him for the occasion, that he might summon all his fortitude to his assistance, and accordingly made him acquainted with the information he had received. The admiral gave tokens of surprise and resentment, but betrayed no marks of fear or disorder, either then or in the court, when the sentence was pronounced. On the contrary, while divers members of the court-martial manifested grief, anxiety, and trepidation, shedding tears, and sighing with extraordinary emotion, he heard his doom denounced without undergoing the least alteration of feature, and made a low obeisance to the president and the other members of the court as he retired.

The officers who composed this tribunal were so sensible of the law's severity, that they unanimously subscribed a letter to the board of Admiralty, containing this remarkable paragraph:—"We cannot help laying the distresses of our minds before your lordships on this occasion, in finding ourselves under necessity of condemning a man to death, from the great severity of the twelfth article of war, part of which he falls under, which admits of no mitigation if the crime should be

committed by an error in judgment; and, therefore, for our own consciences' sake, as well as in justice to the prisoner, we pray your lordships, in the most earnest manner, to recommend him to his majesty's clemency." The lords of the Admiralty, instead of complying with the request of the court-martial, transmitted their letter to the king, with copies of their proceedings, and a letter from themselves to his majesty, specifying a doubt with regard to the legality of the sentence, as the crime of negligence, for which the admiral had been condemned, was not expressed in any part of the proceedings. At the same time, copies of two petitions from George, Lord Viscount Torrington, in behalf of his kinsman Admiral Byng, were submitted to his majesty's royal wisdom and determination. All the friends and relations of the unhappy convict employed and exerted their influence and interest for his pardon; and as the circumstances had appeared so strong in his favour, it was supposed that the sceptre of royal mercy would be extended for his preservation; but infamous arts were used to whet the savage appetite of the populace for blood. The cry of vengeance was loud throughout the land; sullen clouds of suspicion and malevolence interposing were said to obstruct the genial beams of the best virtue that adorns the throne; and the sovereign was given to understand, that the execution of Admiral Byng was a victim absolutely necessary to appease the fury of the people. His majesty, in consequence of the representation made by the lords of the Admiralty, referred the sentence to the consideration of the twelve judges, who were unanimously of opinion, that the sentence was legal. This report being transmitted from the privy-council to the Admiralty, their lordships issued a warrant for executing the sentence of death on the twenty-eighth day of February. One gentleman at the board, however, refused to subscribe the warrant, assigning for his re-

fusal the reasons which we have inserted by way of note, for the satisfaction of the reader[n].

Though mercy was denied to the criminal, the crown seemed determined to do nothing that should be thought inconsistent with law.—A member of Parliament, who had sat upon the court-martial at Portsmouth, rose up in his place, and made application to the House of Commons in behalf of himself and several other members of that tribunal, praying the aid of the legislature to be released from the oath of secrecy imposed on courts-martial, that they might disclose the grounds on which sentence of death had passed on Admiral Byng, and, perhaps, discover such circumstances as might show the sentence to be improper. Although this application produced no resolution in the House, the king, on the twenty-sixth day of February, sent a message to the Commons by Mr. Secretary Pitt, importing, that though he had determined to let the law take its course with relation to Admiral Byng, and resisted all solicitations to the contrary, yet, as a member of the House had expressed some scruples about the sentence, his majesty had thought fit to respite the execution of it, that there might be an opportunity of knowing, by the separate examination of the members of the court-martial, upon oath, what grounds there were for such scruples, and that his majesty was resolved still to let the sentence be carried into execution, unless it should appear from the said examination that Admiral Byng was unjustly condemned. The sentence might be strictly legal, and at the same time very severe, according to the maxim, *summum jus, summa injuria.* In such cases, and perhaps in such cases only, the rigour of the law ought to be softened by the lenient hand of the royal prerogative. That this was the case of Admiral Byng appears from the warm and eager interces-

[n] See note [Q], vol. vi.

sion of his jury; a species of intercession which hath generally, if not always, prevailed at the foot of the throne, when any thing favourable for the criminal had appeared in the course of the trial. How much more then might it have been expected to succeed, when earnestly urged as a case of conscience in behalf of a man whom his judges had expressly acquitted of cowardice and treachery, the only two imputations that rendered him criminal in the eyes of the nation! Such an interposition of the crown in parliamentary transactions was irregular, unnecessary, and at another juncture might have been productive of violent heats and declamation. At present, however, it passed without censure, as the effect of inattention rather than a design to encroach upon the privileges of the House.

BILL TO RELEASE THE MEMBERS OF THE COURT-MARTIAL, &c.

The message being communicated, a bill was immediately brought in to release the members of the court-martial from the obligation of secrecy, and passed through the Lower House without opposition: but in the House of Lords it appeared to be destitute of a proper foundation. They sent a message to the Commons, desiring them to give leave that such of the members of the court-martial as were members of that House might attend their lordships, in order to be examined on the second reading of the bill; accordingly they, and the rest of the court-martial, attended, and answered all questions without hesitation. As they did not insist upon any excuse, nor produce any satisfactory reason for showing that the man they had condemned was a proper object of mercy, their lordships were of opinion that there was no occasion for passing any such bill, which, therefore, they almost unanimously rejected. It is not easy to conceive what

stronger reasons could be given for proving Mr. Byng an object of mercy than those mentioned in the letter sent to the board of Admiralty by the members of the court-martial, who were empowered to try the imputed offence, consequently must have been deemed well qualified to judge of his conduct.

EXECUTION OF ADMIRAL BYNG.

The unfortunate admiral, being thus abandoned to the stroke of justice, prepared himself for death with resignation and tranquillity. He maintained a surprising cheerfulness to the last; nor did he, from his condemnation to his execution, exhibit the least sign of impatience or apprehension. During that interval he had remained on board of the Monarque, a third-rate ship of war, anchored in the harbour of Portsmouth, under a strong guard, in custody of the Marshal of the Admiralty. On the fourteenth of March, the day fixed for his execution, the boats belonging to the squadron at Spithead being manned and armed, containing their captains and officers, with a detachment of marines, attended this solemnity in the harbour, which was also crowded with an infinite number of other boats and vessels filled with spectators. About noon, the admiral having taken leave of a clergyman, and two friends who accompanied him, walked out of the great cabin to the quarter-deck, where two files of marines were ready to execute the sentence. He advanced with a firm deliberate step, a composed and resolute countenance, and resolved to suffer with his face uncovered, until his friends representing that his looks would possibly intimidate the soldiers, and prevent their taking aim properly, he submitted to their request, threw his hat on the deck, kneeled on a cushion, tied one white handkerchief over his eyes, and dropped the other as a signal for his executioners, who fired a

George the Second.

He (Admiral Byng) advanced with a firm and deliberate step, a composed and resolute countenance, and resolved to suffer with his face uncovered, until his friends representing that his looks would probably intimidate the soldiers, and prevent their taking aim properly, he submitted to their request, threw his hat on the deck, kneeled on a cushion, tied one white handkerchief over his eyes, and dropped the other as a signal for his executioners, who fired a volley so decisive that five balls passed through his body, and he dropped down dead in an instant.

volley so decisive, that five balls passed through his body, and he dropped down dead in an instant. The time in which this tragedy was acted, from his walking out of the cabin to his being deposited in the coffin, did not exceed three minutes.

Thus fell, to the astonishment of all Europe, Admiral John Byng; who, whatever his errors and indiscretions might have been, seems to have been rashly condemned, meanly given up, and cruelly sacrificed to vile considerations. The sentiments of his own fate he avowed on the verge of eternity, when there was no longer any cause of dissimulation, in the following declaration, which, immediately before his death, he delivered to the Marshal of the Admiralty: "A few moments will now deliver me from the virulent persecution, and frustrate the further malice, of my enemies; nor need I envy them a life subject to the sensations my injuries, and the injustice done me, must create. Persuaded I am, that justice will be done to my reputation hereafter; the manner and cause of raising and keeping up the popular clamour and prejudice against me will be seen through. I shall be considered (as I now perceive myself) a victim destined to divert the indignation and resentment of an injured and deluded people from the proper objects. My enemies themselves must now think me innocent. Happy for me, at this my last moment, that I know my own innocence, and am conscious that no part of my country's misfortunes can be owing to me. I heartily wish the shedding of my blood may contribute to the happiness and service of my country; but cannot resign my just claim to a faithful discharge of my duty according to the best of my judgment, and the utmost exertion of my ability for his majesty's honour and my country's service. I am sorry that my endeavours were not attended with more success, and that the armament under my command proved too weak to succeed in an expedition of such moment. Truth

has prevailed over calumny and falsehood, and justice has wiped off the ignominious stain of my supposed want of personal courage, and the charge of disaffection. My heart acquits me of these crimes: but who can be presumptuously sure of his own judgment? If my crime is an error in judgment, or differing in opinion from my judges, and if yet the error in judgment should be on their side, God forgive them, as I do; and may the distress of their minds, and uneasiness of their consciences, which in justice to me they have represented, be relieved, and subside as my resentment has done. The Supreme Judge sees all hearts and motives, and to him I must submit the justice of my cause."

REMARKS ON ADMIRAL BYNG'S FATE.

Notwithstanding all that has been said in his favour, notwithstanding the infamous arts that were practised to keep up the cry against him, notwithstanding this solemn appeal to Heaven in his last moments, and even self-conviction of innocence, the character of Admiral Byng, in point of personal courage, will still, with many people, remain problematical. They will still be of opinion, that if the spirit of a British admiral had been properly exerted, the French fleet would have been defeated, and Minorca relieved. A man's opinion of danger varies at different times, in consequence of an irregular tide of animal spirits, and he is actuated by considerations which he dares not avow. After an officer, thus influenced, has hesitated or kept aloof in the hour of trial, the mind, eager for its own justification, assembles, with surprising industry, every favourable circumstance of excuse, and broods over them with parental partiality, until it becomes not only satisfied, but even enamoured of their beauty and complexion, like a doting mother, blind to the deformity of her own offspring. Whatever Mr. Byng's internal feelings

might have been; whatever consequences might have attended his behaviour on that occasion; as the tribunal before which he was tried acquitted him expressly of cowardice and treachery, he was, without all doubt, a proper object for royal clemency; and so impartial posterity will judge him, after all those dishonourable motives of faction and of fear, by which his fate was influenced, shall be lost in oblivion, or remembered with disdain. The people of Great Britain, naturally fierce, impatient, and clamorous, have been too much indulged, upon every petty miscarriage, with trials, courts-martial, and dismissions, which tend only to render their military commanders rash and precipitate, the populace more licentious and intractable, and to disgrace the national character in the opinion of mankind.

END OF VOL. IV.

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